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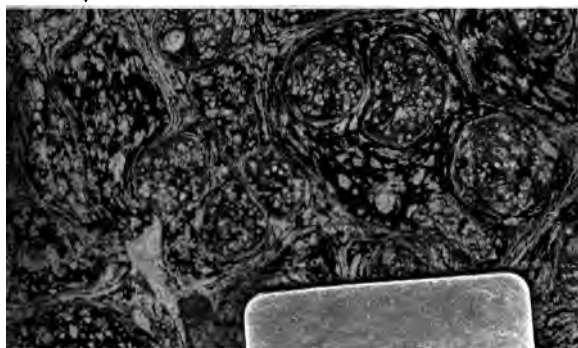
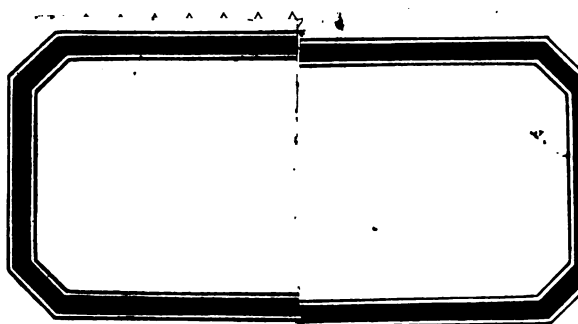
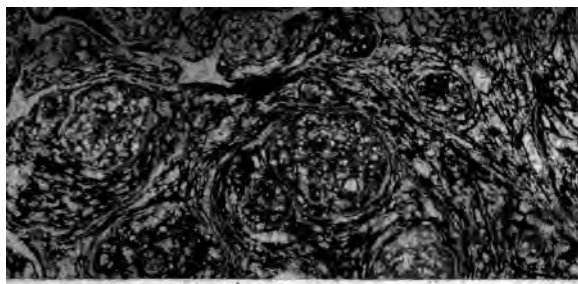
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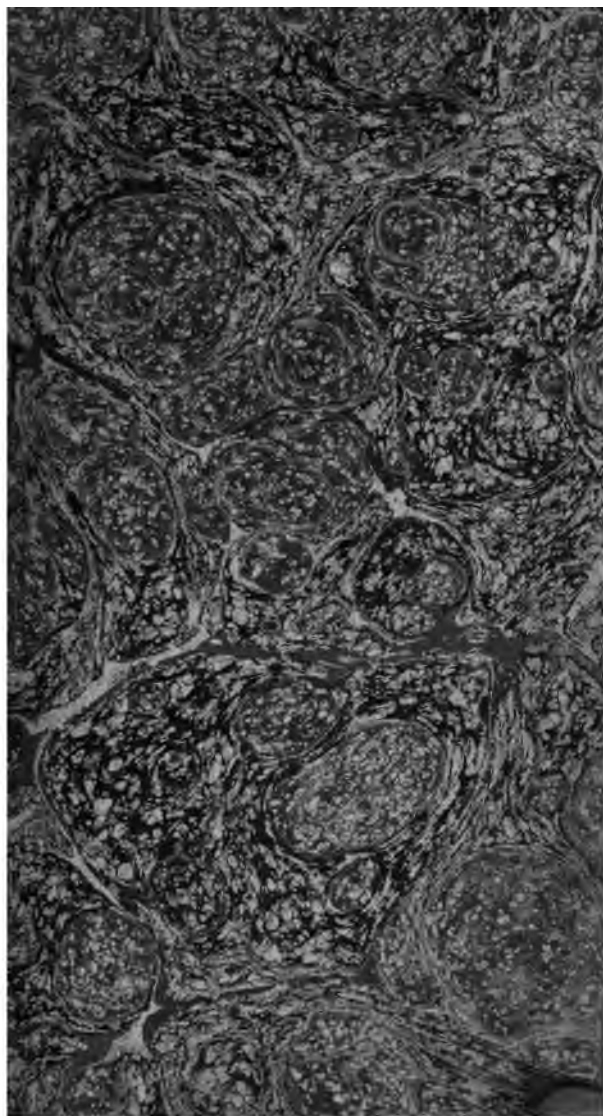
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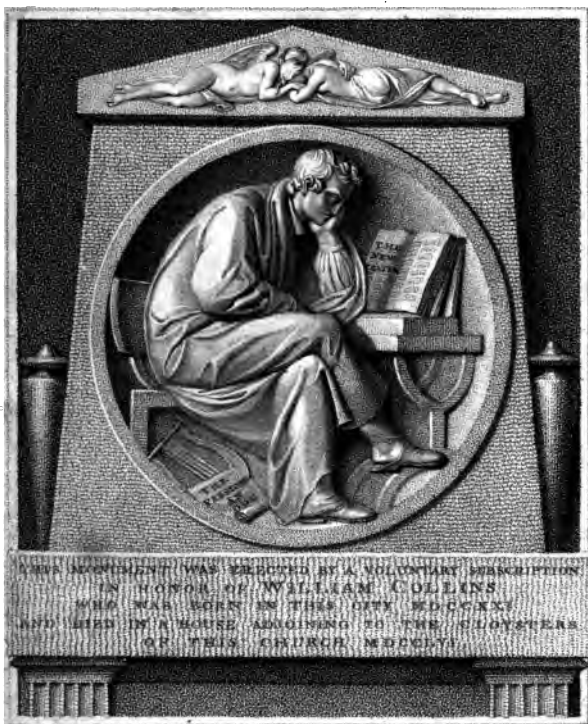
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From the House of the

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MONUMENT to the Memory of COLLINS,
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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF

WILLIAM COLLINS;

WITH THE
COMMENTARY OF LANGHORNE.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF COLLINS,

WRITTEN BY
DR. JOHNSON.

—
EMBELLISHED WITH ENGRAVINGS,

FROM THE DESIGNS OF
RICHARD WESTALL, ESQ. R. A.

—
LONDON:
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—
1804.



THE
LIFE
OF
WILLIAM COLLINS.

WILLIAM COLLINS was born at Chichester, on the twenty-fifth of December, about 1720. His father was a hatter, of good reputation. He was, in 1733, as Dr. Warton has kindly informed me, admitted scholar of Winchester College, where he was educated by Dr. Burton. His English exercises were better than his Latin.

He first courted the notice of the public by some verses to a Lady weeping, published in the Gentleman's Magazine.

In 1740, he stood first in the list of the scholars to be received in succession at New

College; but unhappily there was no vacancy. This was the original misfortune of his life. He became a commoner of Queen's College, probably with a scanty maintenance; but was in about half a year elected a demy of Magdalen College, where he continued till he had taken a bachelor's degree, and then suddenly left the University; for what reason I know not that he told.

He now (about 1744) came to London a literary adventurer, with many projects in his head, and very little money in his pocket. He designed many works; but his great fault was irresolution, or the frequent calls of immediate necessity broke his schemes, and suffered him to pursue no settled purpose. A man, doubtful of his dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is not much disposed to abstracted meditation, or remote inquiries. He published proposals for a History of the Revival of Learning; and I have heard him speak with great kindness of Leo the Tenth, and with keen resentment of his tasteless successor. But probably not a page of the History was ever written. He planned several tragedies, but he only planned

them. He wrote now-and-then odes and other poems, and did something, however little.

About this time I fell into his company. His appearance was decent and manly; his knowledge considerable, his views extensive, his conversation elegant, and his disposition cheerful. By degrees I gained his confidence; and one day was admitted to him when he was immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the street. On this occasion recourse was had to the booksellers, who, on the credit of a translation of Aristotle's Poetics, which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country. He shewed me the guineas safe in his hand. Soon afterwards his uncle, Mr. Martin, a lieutenant-colonel, left him about two thousand pounds; a sum which Collins could scarcely think exhaustible, and which he did not live to exhaust. The guineas were then repaid, and the translation neglected.

But man is not born for happiness; Collins, who, while he *studied to live*, felt no evil but poverty, no sooner *lived to study* than his

of life, it would be prejudice and temerity to affirm; but it may be said that at least he preserved the source of action unpolluted, that his principles were never shaken, that his distinctions of right and wrong were never confounded, and that his faults had nothing of malignity or design, but proceeded from some unexpected pressure, or casual temptation.

“ The latter part of his life cannot be remembered but with pity and sadness. He languished some years under that depression of mind which unchains the faculties without destroying them, and leaves reason the knowledge of right, without the power of pursuing it. These clouds which he perceived gathering on his intellects, he endeavoured to disperse by travel, and passed into France: but found himself constrained to yield to his malady, and returned. He was for some time confined in a house of lunatics, and afterwards retired to the care of his sister in Chichester, where death in 1756 came to his relief.

“ After his return from France, the writer of this character paid him a visit at Islington,

where he was waiting for his sister, whom he had directed to meet him: there was then nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself; but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament, such as children carry to the school: when his friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a man of letters had chosen, ‘I have but one book,’ said Collins, ‘but that is the best.’

“Such was the fate of Collins, with whom I once delighted to converse, and whom I yet remember with tenderness.

“He was visited at Chichester, in his last illness, by his learned friends Dr. Warton and his brother; to whom he spoke with disapprobation of his *Oriental Eclogues*, as not sufficiently expressive of Asiatic manners, and called them his *Irish Eclogues*. He shewed them, at the same time, an ode inscribed to Mr. John Hume, on the Superstitions of the Highlands; which they thought superior to his other works.

“His disorder was not alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleness; a deficiency

rather of his vital than intellectual powers. What he spoke wanted neither judgment nor spirit; but a few minutes exhausted him, so that he was forced to rest upon the couch, till a short cessation restored his powers, and he was again able to talk with his former vigour.

“ The approaches of this dreadful malady he began to feel soon after his uncle’s death; and, with the usual weakness of men so diseased, eagerly snatched that temporary relief with which the table and the bottle flatter and seduce. But his health continually declined, and he grew more and more burthensome to himself.

“ To what I have formerly said of his writings may be added, that his diction was often harsh, unskilfully laboured, and injudiciously selected. He affected the obsolete when it was not worthy of revival; and he puts his words out of the common order, seeming to think, with some later candidates for fame, that not to write prose is certainly to write poetry. His lines commonly are of slow motion, clogged and impeded with clusters of consonants. As men are often esteemed who cannot be loved,

so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise, when it gives little pleasure."

Mr. Collins's first production is added here from the Poetical Calendar :

TO MISS AURELIA C—R,
ON HER WEEPING AT HER SISTER'S WEDDING.

CEASE, fair Aurelia, cease to mourn;
Lament not Hannah's happy state;
You may be happy in your turn,
And seize the treasure you regret.

With Love united Hymen stands,
And softly whispers to your charms;
"Meet but your lover in my bands,
"You'll find your sister in his arms."

A monument of the most exquisite workmanship has been erected by public subscription to Collins. He is finely represented as just recovered from a wild fit of phrensy, to which he was unhappily subject, and in a calm and reclining posture, seeking refuge from his misfortunes in the consolations of the Gospel, while his lyre and one of the first of his poems lie neglected on the ground.

Above are two beautiful figures of Love and Pity entwined in each other's arms. The whole was executed by the ingenious Flaxman, at that time lately returned from Rome ; and if any thing can equal the expressive sweetness of the sculpture, it is the following most excellent epitaph, written by Mr. Hayley.

Ye who the merits of the dead revere,
 Who hold misfortune's sacred genius dear,
 Regard this tomb, where Collins, hapless name,
 Solicits kindness with a double claim.
 Tho' Nature gave him, and tho' Science taught
 The fire of Fancy, and the reach of thought,
 Severely doom'd to Penury's extreme,
 He pass'd in madd'ning pain life's fev'rish dream,
 While rays of genius only serv'd to shew
 The thick'ning horror, and exalt his woe.
 Ye walls that echo'd to his frantic moan,
 Guard the due records of this grateful stone ;
 Strangers to him, enamour'd of his lays,
 This fond memorial to his talents raise.
 For this the ashes of a bard require,
 Who touch'd the tend'rest notes of Pity's lyre ;
 Who join'd pure faith to strong poetic powers,
 Who, in reviving Reason's lucid hours,
 Sought on one book his troubled mind to rest,
 And rightly deem'd the book of God the best.

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ORIENTAL ECLOGUES.

ECLOGUE I.

SELIM;

OR,

THE SHEPHERD'S MORAL.

SCENE, A VALLEY NEAR BAGDAT.

TIME, THE MORNING.

“**Y**E Persian maids, attend your poet's lays,
And hear how shepherds pass their golden days,
Not all are blest whom Fortune's hand sustains
With wealth in courts; nor all that haunt the plains;
Well may your hearts believe the truths I tell;
'Tis virtue makes the bliss, where'er we dwell.”

Thus Selim sung, by sacred Truth inspir'd;
Nor praise, but such as Truth bestow'd, desir'd:

Wise in himself, his meaning songs convey'd
 Informing morals to the shepherd maid ;
 Or taught the swains that surest bliss to find,
 What groves nor streams bestow, a virtuous mind.

When sweet and blushing, like a virgin bride,
 The radiant morn resum'd her orient pride ;
 When wanton gales along the valleys play,
 Breathe on each flower, and bear their sweets away ;
 By Tigris' wandering waves he sat, and sung
 This useful lesson for the fair and young.

“ Ye Persian dames,” he said, “ to you belong—
 Well may they please—the morals of my song :
 No fairer maids, I trust, than you are found,
 Grac'd with soft arts, the peopled world around !
 The morn, that lights you, to your love supplies
 Each gentler ray delicious to your eyes :
 For you those flowers her fragrant hands bestow ;
 And yours the love that kings delight to know.
 Yet think not these, all beauteous as they are,
 The best kind blessings heaven can grant the fair !
 Who trust alone in beauty's feeble ray
 Boast but the worth Bassora's pearls display :

Drawn from the deep we own their surface bright ;
 But, dark within, they drink no lustrous light :
 Such are the maids, and such the charms they boast,
 By sense unaided, or to virtue lost.
 Self-flattering sex ! your hearts believe in vain
 That love shall blind, when once he fires, the swain ;
 Or hope a lover by your faults to win,
 As spots on ermine beautify the skin :
 Who seeks secure to rule be first her care
 Each softer virtue that adorns the fair ;
 Each tender passion man delights to find ;
 The lov'd perfections of a female mind !

Blest were the days when Wisdom held her reign,
 And shepherds sought her on the silent plain !
 With Truth she wedded in the secret grove ;
 Immortal Truth ; and daughters bless'd their love.
 —O haste, fair maids ! ye Virtues, come away !
 Sweet Peace and Plenty lead you on your way !
 The balmy shrub for you shall love our shore,
 By Ind excell'd, or Araby, no more.

Lost to our fields, for so the fates ordain,
 The dear deserters shall return again.

Come thou, whose thoughts as limpid springs are clear,
 To lead the train, sweet Modesty, appear :
 Here make thy court amidst our rural scene,
 And shepherd girls shall own thee for their queen :
 With thee be Chastity, of all afraid,
 Distrusting all ;—a wise suspicious maid ;—
 But man the most :—not more the mountain-doe
 Holds the swift falcon for her deadly foe.
 Cold is her breast, like flowers that drink the dew ;
 A silken veil conceals her from the view.
 No wild desires amidst thy train be known ;
 But Faith, whose heart is fixt on one alone :
 Desponding Meekness, with her downcast eyes,
 And friendly Pity, full of tender sighs ;
 And Love the last : by these your hearts approve ;
 These are the virtues that must lead to love.

Thus sung the swain ; and ancient legends say
 The maids of Bagdat verified the lay :
 Dear to the plains, the Virtues came along ;
 The shepherds lov'd ; and Selim bless'd his song.

ECLOGUE II.

HASSAN;

OR,

THE CAMEL-DRIVER.

SCENE, THE DESERT.

TIME, MID-DAY.

IN silent horror o'er the boundless waste
 The driver Hassan with his camels past :
 One cruise of water on his back he bore,
 And his light scrip contain'd a scanty store ;
 A fan of painted feathers in his hand,
 To guard his shaded face from scorching sand.
 The sultry sun had gain'd the middle sky,
 And not a tree, and not an herb was nigh ;
 The beasts with pain their dusty way pursue ;
 Shrill roar'd the winds, and dreary was the view !
 With desperate sorrow wild, the affrighted man
 Thrice sigh'd ; thrice struck his breast ; and thus
 began :

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
 “ When first from Schiraz’ walls I bent my way!”

Ah! little thought I of the blasting wind,
 The thirst, or pinching hunger, that I find!
 Bethink thee, Hassan, where shall thirst assuage,
 When fails this cruise, his unrelenting rage?
 Soon shall this scrip its precious load resign;
 Then what but tears and hunger shall be thine?

Ye mute companions of my toils, that bear
 In all my griefs a more than equal share!
 Here, where no springs in murmurs break away,
 Or moss-crown’d fountains mitigate the day,
 In vain ye hope the green delights to know
 Which plains more blest, or verdant vales, bestow:
 Here rocks alone, and tasteless sands, are found;
 And faint and sickly winds for ever howl around.

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
 “ When first from Schiraz’ walls I bent my way!”

Curst be the gold and silver which persuade
 Weak men to follow far fatiguing trade!
 The lily peace outshines the silver store;
 And life is dearer than the golden ore:

Yet money tempts us o'er the desert brown,
To every distant mart and wealthy town.

Full oft we tempt the land, and oft the sea;

And are we only yet repaid by thee?

—Ah! why was ruin so attractive made?

Or why fond man so easily betray'd?

Why heed we not, while mad we haste along,

The gentle voice of peace, or pleasure's song?

Or wherefore think the flowery mountain's side,

The fountain's murmurs, and the valley's pride,

Why think we these less pleasing to behold

Than dreary deserts, if they lead to gold!

“Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,

“When first from Sthiraz' walls I bent my
way!”

O cease, my fears!—all frantic as I go,
When thought creates unnumber'd scenes of woe,

What if the lion in his rage I meet!—

Oft in the dust I view his printed feet:

And, fearful! oft, when day's declining light

Yields her pale empire to the mourner night,

By hunger rous'd, he scours the groaning plain,

Gaunt wolves and sullen tigers in his train:

Before them Death with shrieks directs their way,
Fills the wild yell, and leads them to their prey.

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
“ When first from Schiraz’ walls I bent my way!”

At that dead hour the silent asp shall creep,
If aught of rest I find, upon my sleep:
Or some swoln serpent twist his scales around,
And wake to anguish with a burning wound.
Thrice happy they, the wise contented poor,
From lust of wealth, and dread of death secure!
They tempt no deserts, and no griefs they find;
Peace rules the day, where reason rules the mind.

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
“ When first from Schiraz’ walls I bent my way!”

O hapless youth!—for she thy love hath won—
The tender Zara will be most undone!
Big swell’d my heart, and own’d the powerful maid,
When fast she dropt her tears, as thus she said:
“ Farewell the youth whom sighs could not detain;
“ Whom Zara’s breaking heart implor’d in vain!
“ Yet, as thou go’st, may every blast arise
“ Weak and unfelt, as these rejected sighs!

“ Safe o’er the wild, no perils may’st thou see ;
“ No griefs endure ; nor weep, false youth, like me.”
—O let me safely to the fair return ;
Say, with a kiss, she must not, shall not mourn ;
O ! let me teach my heart to lose its fears,
Recall’d by Wisdom’s voice, and Zara’s tears.

He said, and call’d on heaven to bless the day.
When back to Schiraz’ walls he bent his way.

ECLOGUE III.

 ABRA,

OR,

THE GEORGIAN SULTANA.

SCENE, A FOREST.

TIME, THE EVENING.

IN Georgia's land, where Tefflis' towers are seen,
 In distant view, along the level green,
 While evening dews enrich the glittering glade,
 And the tall forests cast a longer shade,
 What time 'tis sweet o'er fields of rice to stray,
 Or scent the breathing maze at setting day;
 Amidst the maids of Zagen's peaceful grove,
 Emyra sung the pleasing cares of love.

Of Abra first began the tender strain,
 Who led her youth with flocks upon the plain:
 At morn she came those willing flocks to lead,
 Where lilies rear them in the watery mead;



The Shepherd and the Girl

The Shepherd and the Girl

• At length he found a place where he could
 • The more the more he, and with great strength.



From early dawn the livelong hours she told,
 Till late at silent eve she penn'd the fold :
 Deep in the grove, beneath the secret shade,
 A various wreath of odorous flowers she made :
 Gay-motley'd¹ pinks and sweet jonquils she chose ;
 The violet blue that on the moss-bank grows ;
 All-sweet to sense, the flaunting rose was there ;
 The finish'd chaplet well-adorn'd her hair.

Great Abbas chanc'd that fated morn to stray,
 By love conducted from the chase away ;
 Among the vocal vales he heard her song ;
 And sought, the vales and echoing groves among ;
 At length he found, and woo'd, the rural maid ;
 She knew the monarch, and with fear obey'd.

“ Be every youth like royal Abbas mov'd ;
 “ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd !”

The royal lover bore her from the plain ;
 Yet still her crook and bleating flock remain :
 Oft, as she went, she backward turn'd her view,
 And bade that crook and bleating flock adieu.

¹ That these flowers are found in very great abundance in some of the provinces of Persia ; see the Modern History of Mr. Salmon.

Fair happy maid! to other scenes remove;
 To richer scenes of golden power and love!
 Go leave the simple pipe, and shepherd's strain;
 With love delight thee, and with Abbas reign!

“ Be every youth like royal Abbas mov'd;

“ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd!”

Yet, 'midst the blaze of courts, she fix'd her love
 On the cool fountain, or the shady grove;
 Still, with the shepherd's innocence, her mind
 To the sweet vale, and flowery mead, inclin'd;
 And, oft as spring renew'd the plains with flowers,
 Breath'd his soft gales, and led the fragrant hours,
 With sure return she sought the sylvan scene,
 The breezy mountains, and the forests green.
 Her maids around her mov'd, a duteous band!
 Each bore a crook, all-rural, in her hand:
 Some simple lay, of flocks and herds they sung;
 With joy the mountain, and the forest rung.

“ Be every youth like royal Abbas mov'd;

“ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd!”

And oft the royal lover left the care
 And thorns of state, attendant on the fair;

Oft to the shades and low-roof'd cots retir'd ;
 Or sought the vale where first his heart was fir'd :
 A russet mantle, like a swain, he wore ;
 And thought of crowns, and busy courts, no more.

“ Be every youth like royal Abbas mov'd ;
 “ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd !”

Blest was the life that royal Abbas led :
 Sweet was his love, and innocent his bed.
 What if in wealth the noble maid excel ?
 The simple shepherd girl can love as well.
 Let those who rule in Persia's jewell'd throne
 Be fam'd for love, and gentlest love alone ;
 Or wreath, like Abbas, full of fair renown,
 The lover's myrtle with the warrior's crown.
 Oh happy days ! the maids around her say ;
 O haste ; profuse of blessings, haste away !

“ Be every youth, like royal Abbas, mov'd ;
 “ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd !”

ECLOGUE IV.

AGIB AND SECANDER;

OR,

THE FUGITIVES.

SCENE, A MOUNTAIN IN CIRCASSIA.

TIME, MIDNIGHT.

IN fair Circassia, where, to love inclin'd,
 Each swain was blest, for every maid was kind;
 At that still hour when awful midnight reigns,
 And none but wretches haunt the twilight plains;
 What time the moon had hung her lamp on high,
 And past in radiance through the cloudless sky;
 Sad, o'er the dews, two brother shepherds fled
 Where wildering fear and desperate sorrow led:
 Fast as they prest their flight, behind them lay
 Wide ravag'd plains; and vallies stole away:

Along the mountain's bending sides they ran,
Till, faint and weak, Secander thus began.

SECANDER.

O stay thee, Agib, for my feet deny,
No longer friendly to my life, to fly.
Friend of my heart, O turn thee and survey!
Trace our sad flight through all its length of way!
And first review that long-extended plain,
And yon wide groves, already past with pain!
Yon ragged cliff, whose dangerous path we tried!
And, last, this lofty mountain's weary side!

AGIB.

Weak as thou art, yet, hapless, must thou know
The toils of flight, or some severer woe!
Still, as I haste, the Tartar shouts behind;
And shrieks and sorrows load the saddening wind:
In rage of heart, with ruin in his hand,
He blasts our harvests, and deforms our land.
Yon citron grove, whence first in fear we came,
Droops its fair honours to the conquering flame:
Far fly the swains, like us, in deep despair,
And leave to ruffian bands their fleecy care.

SECANDER.

Unhappy land, whose blessings tempt the sword,
 In vain, unheard, thou call'st thy Persian lord !
 In vain thou court'st him, helpless, to thine aid,
 To shield the shepherd, and protect the maid !
 Far off, in thoughtless indolence resign'd,
 Soft dreams of love and pleasure soothe his mind :
 'Midst fair sultanas lost in idle joy,
 No wars alarm him, and no fears annoy.

AGIB.

Yet these green hills, in summer's sultry heat,
 Have lent the monarch oft a cool retreat.
 Sweet to the sight is Zabran's flowery plain ;
 And once by maids and shepherds lov'd in vain !
 No more the virgins shall delight to rove
 By Sargis' banks, or Irwan's shady grove ;
 On Tarkie's mountain catch the cooling gale,
 Or breathe the sweets of Aly's flowery vale :
 Fair scene ! but, ah ! no more with peace possess,
 With ease alluring, and with plenty blest !
 No more the shepherds whitening tents appear,
 Nor the kind products of a bounteous year ;
 No more the date, with snowy blossoms crown'd !
 But ruin spreads her baleful fires around.

SECANDER.

In vain Circassia boasts her spicy groves,
 For ever fam'd for pure and happy loves:
 In vain she boasts her fairest of the fair,
 Their eyes blue languish, and their golden hair!
 Those eyes in tears their fruitless grief must send;
 Those hairs the Tartar's cruel hand shall rend.

AGIB.

Ye Georgian swains, that piteous learn from far
 Circassia's ruin, and the waste of war;
 Some weightier arms than crooks and staffs prepare;
 To shield your harvest, and defend your fair:
 The Turk and Tartar like designs pursue,
 Fix'd to destroy, and stedfast to undo.
 Wild as his land, in native deserts bred,
 By lust incited, or by malice led,
 The villain Arab, as he prowls for prey,
 Oft marks with blood and wasting flames the way.
 Yet none so cruel as the Tartar foe,
 To death inur'd, and nurst in scenes of woe.

He said; when loud along the vale was heard
 A shriller shriek; and nearer fires appear'd:
 The affrighted shepherds, through the dews of night,
 Wide o'er the moon-light hills renew'd their flight.

ODE TO PITY.

O THOU, the friend of man assign'd,
 With balmy hands his wounds to bind,
 And charm his frantic woe :
 When first Distress, with dagger keen,
 Broke forth to waste his destin'd scene,
 His wild unsated foe !

By Pella's¹ bard, a magic name,
 By all the griefs his thought could frame,
 Receive my humble rite :
 Long, Pity, let the nations view
 Thy sky-worn robes of tend'rest blue,
 And eyes of dewy light !

But wherefore need I wander wide
 To old Illissus' distant side,

¹ Euripides, of whom Aristotle pronounces, on a comparison of him with Sophocles, that he was the greater master of the tender passions, ην τραγικωτερος.

Deserted stream, and mute?
 Wild Arun² too has heard thy strains,
 And Echo, midst thy native plains,
 Been sooth'd by Pity's lute.

There first the wren thy myrtles shed
 On gentlest Otway's infant head,
 To him thy cell was shewn;
 And while he sung the female heart,
 With youth's soft notes unspoil'd by art,
 Thy turtles mix'd their own.

Come, Pity, come, by Fancy's aid,
 E'en now my thoughts, relenting maid,
 Thy temple's pride design:
 Its southern site, its truth complete,
 Shall raise a wild enthusiast heat
 In all who view the shrine.

There Picture's toils shall well relate,
 How chance, or hard involving fate,

² The river Arun runs by the village in Sussex, where Otway had his birth.

O'er mortal bliss prevail :
The buskin'd Muse shall near her stand,
And sighing prompt her tender hand,
With each disastrous tale.

There let me oft, retir'd by day,
In dreams of passion melt away,
Allow'd with thee to dwell :
There waste the mournful lamp of night,
Till, Virgin, thou again delight
To hear a British shell !

ODE TO FEAR.

THOU, to whom the world unknown,
 With all its shadowy shapes, is shewn;
 Who seest, appall'd, the unreal scene,
 While Fancy lifts the veil between:

Ah Fear! ah frantic Fear!

I see, I see thee near.

I know thy hurried step; thy haggard eye!
 Like thee I start; like thee disorder'd fly.
 For, lo, what monsters in thy train appear!
 Danger, whose limbs of giant mould
 What mortal eye can fix'd behold?
 Who stalks his round, an hideous form,
 Howling amidst the midnight storm;
 Or throws him on the ridgy steep
 Of some loose hanging rock to sleep:
 And with him thousand phantoms join'd,
 Who prompt to deeds accurs'd the mind:
 And those, the fiends, who, near allied,
 O'er Nature's wounds, and wrecks, preside;

Whilst Vengeance, in the lurid air,
 Lifts her red arm, expos'd and bare :
 On whom that ravening¹ brood of Fate
 Who lap the blood of sorrow wait :
 Who, Fear, this ghastly train can see,
 And look not madly wild, like thee !

EPODE.

In earliest Greece, to thee, with partial choice,
 The grief-full Muse address her infant tongue ;
 The maids and matrons, on her awful voice,
 Silent and pale, in wild amazement hung.

Yet he, the bard² who first invok'd thy name,
 Disdain'd in Marathon its power to feel :
 For not alone he nurs'd the poet's flame,
 But reach'd from Virtue's hand the patriot's steel.

But who is he whom later garlands grace ;
 Who left a while o'er Hybla's dew to rove,
 With trembling eyes thy dreary steps to trace,
 Where thou and furies shar'd the baleful grove ?

¹ Alluding to the *Κυνες αἰνυτρες* of Sophocles. See the
 ELECTRA.

² *Æschylus*.

Wrapt in thy cloudy veil, th' incestuous³ queen
 Sigh'd the sad call⁴ her son and husband heard,
 When once alone it broke the silent scene,
 And he the wretch of Thebes no more appear'd.

O Fear, I know thee by my throbbing heart:
 Thy withering power inspir'd each mournful line:
 Though gentle Pity claim her mingled part,
 Yet all the thunders of the scene are thine!

ANTISTROPHE.

Thou who such weary lengths hast past,
 Where wilt thou rest, mad Nymph, at last?
 Say, wilt thou shroud in haunted cell,
 Where gloomy Rape and Murder dwell?
 Or, in some hollow'd seat,
 'Gainst which the big waves beat,
 Hear drowning seamen's cries, in tempests brought?
 Dark power, with shudd'ring meek submitted thought.

³ Jocasta.

⁴ ——— υδ' ετ' ορωρει βοη

Εν μιν Σιωπη; φθιγμα δ' εξαφνης τινος
 Θωυξεν αυλον, ωστε παντας ορθιας
 Στησαι φοβω δεισαντας εξαφνης Τριχας.

See the Œdip. Colou. of Sophocles.



Be mine to read the visions old
Which thy awakening bards have told :
And, lest thou meet my blasted view,
Hold each strange tale devoutly true ;
Ne'er be I found, by thee o'eraw'd,
In that thrice-hallow'd eve, abroad,
When ghosts, as cottage-maids believe,
Their pebbled beds permitted leave ;
And goblins haunt, from fire, or fen,
Or mine, or flood, the walks of men !

O thou whose spirit most possess
The sacred seat of Shakspeare's breast !
By all that from thy prophet broke,
In thy divine emotions spoke ;
Hither again thy fury deal,
Teach me but once like him to feel :
His cypress wreath my meed decree,
And I, O Fear, will dwell with thee !

ODE TO SIMPLICITY.

O THOU, by Nature taught
To breathe her genuine thought,
In numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong;
Who first, on mountains wild,
In Fancy, loveliest child,
Thy babe, or Pleasure's, nurs'd the powers of song!

Thou, who, with hermit heart,
Disdain'st the wealth of art,
And gauds, and pageant weeds, and trailing pall;
But com'st a decent maid,
In attic robe array'd,
O chaste, unboastful Nymph, to thee I call!

By all the honey'd store
On Hybla's thymy shore;

By all her blooms, and mingled murmurs dear ;
 By her¹ whose love-lorn woe,
 In evening musings slow,
 Sooth'd sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear :

By old Cephissus deep,
 Who spread his wavy sweep,
 In warbled wanderings, round thy green retreat ;
 On whose enamell'd side,
 When holy Freedom died,
 No equal haunt allur'd thy future feet.

O sister meek of Truth,
 To my admiring youth,
 Thy sober aid and native charms infuse !
 The flowers that sweetest breathe,
 Though Beauty cull'd the wreath,
 Still ask thy hand to range their order'd hues.

While Rome could none esteem
 But virtue's patriot theme,

¹ The *andwy*, or nightingale, for which Sophocles seems to have entertained a peculiar fondness.

You lov'd her hills, and led her laureat band :
 But staid to sing alone
 To one distinguish'd throne ;
 And turn'd thy face, and fled her alter'd land.

No more, in hall or bow'r,
 The Passions own thy power ;
 Love, only Love her forceless numbers mean :
 For thou hast left her shrine ;
 Nor olive more, nor vine,
 Shall gain thy feet to bless the servile scene.

Though taste, though genius, bless
 To some divine excess,
 Faints the cold work till thou inspire the whole ;
 What each, what all supply,
 May court, may charm, our eye ;
 Thou, only thou canst raise the meeting soul !

Of these let others ask,
 To aid some mighty task,
 I only seek to find thy temperate vale ;
 Where oft my reed might sound
 To maids and shepherds round,
 And all thy sons, O Nature, learn my tale.

ODE

ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER.

As once,—if, not with light regard,
 I read aright that gifted bard,
 —Him whose school above the rest
 His loveliest elfin queen has blest;—
 One, only one, unrival'd¹ fair,
 Might hope the magic girdle wear,
 At solemn turney hung on high,
 The wish of each love-darting eye;

—Lo! to each other nymph, in turn, applied,
 As if, in air unseen, some hovering hand,
 Some chaste and angel-friend to virgin-fame,
 With whisper'd spell had burst the starting band,
 It left unblest her loath'd dishonour'd side;
 Happier hopeless Fair, if never
 Her baffled hand with vain endeavour,
 Had touch'd that fatal zone to her denied!

¹ Florimel. See Spenser Leg. 4th.

Young Fancy thus, to me divinest name,
 To whom, prepar'd and bath'd in heaven,
 The cest of amplest power is given :
 To few the godlike gift assigns,
 To gird their best prophetic loins,
 And gaze her visions wild, and feel unmix'd her flame !

The band, as fairy legends say,
 Was wove on that creating day
 When He, who call'd with thought to birth
 Yon tented sky, this laughing earth,
 And drest with springs and forests tall,
 And pour'd the main engirting all,
 Long by the lov'd enthusiast woo'd,
 Himself in some diviner mood,
 Retiring, sat with her alone,
 And plac'd her on his sapphire throne ;
 The whiles, the vaulted shrine around,
 Seraphic wires were heard to sound,
 Now sublimest triumph swelling,
 Now on love and mercy dwelling ;
 And she, from out the veiling cloud,
 Breath'd her magic notes aloud :

And thou, thou rich-hair'd youth of morn,
 And all thy subject life was born !
 The dangerous passions kept aloof,
 Far from the sainted growing woof :
 But near it sat ecstatic Wonder,
 Listening the deep applauding thunder ;
 And Truth, in sunny vest array'd,
 By whose the tarsel's eyes were made ;
 All the shadowy tribes of mind,
 In braided dance, their murmurs join'd,
 And all the bright uncounted powers
 Who feed on heaven's ambrosial flowers.
 —Where is the bard whose soul can now
 Its high presuming hopes avow ?
 Where he who thinks, with rapture blind,
 This hallow'd work for him design'd ?

High on some cliff, to heaven up-pil'd,
 Of rude access, of prospect wild,
 Where, tangled round the jealous steep,
 Strange shades o'erbrow the valleys deep,
 And holy Genii guard the rock,
 Its glooms embrown, its springs unlock,

While on its rich ambitious head,
 An Eden, like his own, lies spread.
 I view that oak, the fancied glades among,
 By which as Milton lay, his evening ear,
 From many a cloud that dropp'd ethereal dew,
 Nigh spher'd in heaven, its native strains could hear;
 On which that ancient trump he reach'd was hung :
 Thither oft, his glory greeting,
 From Waller's myrtle shades retreating,
 With many a vow from Hope's aspiring tongue,
 My trembling feet his guiding steps pursue;
 In vain—Such bliss to one alone,
 Of all the sons of soul, was known;
 And Heaven, and Fancy, kindred powers,
 Have now o'erturn'd th' inspiring bowers;
 Or curtain'd close such scene from ev'ry future view.

ODE,

WRITTEN IN THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 1746.

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest !
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung ;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung ;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay ;
And Freedom shall a while repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there !

ODE TO MERCY.

STROPHE.

O THOU, who sit'st a smiling bride
 By valour's arm'd and awful side,
 Gentlest of sky-born forms, and best ador'd;
 Who oft with songs, divine to hear,
 Win'st from his fatal grasp the spear,
 And hid'st in wreaths of flow'rs his bloodless sword!
 Thou who, amidst the deathful field,
 By godlike chiefs alone beheld,
 Oft with thy bosom bare art found,
 Pleading for him the youth who sinks to ground:
 See, Mercy, see, with pure and loaded hands,
 Before thy shrine my country's genius stands,
 And decks thy altar still, tho' pierc'd with many a
 wound!

ANTISTROPHE.

When he whom ev'n our joys provoke,
 The fiend of nature join'd his yoke,
 And rush'd in wrath to make our isle his prey;

Thy form, from out thy sweet abode,
O'ertook him on his blasted road,
And stop'd his wheels, and look'd his rage away.

I see recoil his sable steeds,
That bore him swift to salvage deeds,
Thy tender melting eyes they own;
O maid, for all thy love to Britain shown,
Where Justice bars her iron tow'r,
To thee we build a roseate bow'r,
Thou, thou shalt rule our queen, and share our
monarch's throne!

ODE TO LIBERTY.

STROPHE.

WHO shall awake the Spartan fire,
 And call in solemn sounds to life,
 The youths, whose locks divinely spreading,
 Like vernal hyacinths in sullen hue,
 At once the breath of fear and virtue shedding,
 Applauding Freedom lov'd of old to view?
 What new Alcæus¹, fancy-blest,
 Shall sing the sword, in myrtles drest,

¹ Alluding to that beautiful fragment of Alcæus.

Εν Μυρτῇ κλαδί το ξίφος φορήσω,
 Ωσπερ Αρμοδίου καὶ Αριστογείτων,
 Φιλαβ' Αρμοδι ἔκω Τεθνηκας,
 Νησοῖς δ' ἐν Μανικῶν Σὲ φασὶν εἶναι.
 Εν μυρτῇ κλαδί το ξίφος φορήσω,
 Ωσπερ Αρμοδίου καὶ Αριστογείτων,
 Οτ' Ἀθηναίης ἐν θυσσίαις,
 Ἄνδρα Τυραννοσὶ κπαρχοσὶ ἐκαίνεῖν.
 Αἱ Σφῶν κλειὸς ἐσσεῖται κατ' αἶαν,
 Φιλαβ' Αρμοδι', καὶ Αριστογείτων.

At Wisdom's shrine awhile its flame concealing,
(What place so fit to seal a deed renown'd?)

Till she her brightest lightnings round revealing,
It leap'd in glory forth, and dealt her prompted
wound!

O goddess, in that feeling hour,
When most its sounds would court thy ears,
Let not my shell's misguided pow'r²
E'er draw thy sad, thy mindful tears.
No, Freedom, no, I will not tell
How Rome, before thy weeping face,
With heaviest sound, a giant-statue, fell,
Push'd by a wild and artless race
From off its wide ambitious base,
When Time his northern sons of spoil awoke,
And all the blended work of strength and grace,
With many a rude repeated stroke,
And many a barb'rous yell, to thousand fragments
broke.

EPODE.

Yet, ev'n where'er the least appear'd,
Th' admiring world thy hand rever'd;

² Μη μη ταῦτα λεγωμεν, α Δακρυον ηγαγε Δησι.

Callimach. Ὑμνος εἰς Δημήτρα.

Still 'midst the scatter'd states around,
 Some remnants of her strength were found;
 They saw, by what escap'd the storm,
 How wondrous rose her perfect form;
 How in the great the labour'd whole,
 Each mighty master pour'd his soul!
 For sunny Florence, seat of art,
 Beneath her vines preserv'd a part,
 Till they³, whom Science lov'd to name,
 (O who could fear it?) quench'd her flame.
 And lo, an humbler relic laid
 In jealous Pisa's olive shade!
 See small Marino⁴ joins the theme,
 Tho' least, not last in thy esteem:
 Strike, louder strike th' ennobling strings
 To those⁵, whose merchant sons were kings;
 To him⁶, who, deck'd with pearly pride,
 In Adria weds his green-hair'd bride;
 Hail port of glory, wealth, and pleasure,
 Ne'er let me change this Lydian measure:
 Nor e'er her former pride relaté,
 To sad Liguria's⁷ bleeding state.

³ The family of the Medici.

⁴ The little republic of San Marino. ⁵ The Venetians.

⁶ The Doge of Venice. ⁷ Genoa.

Ah no! more pleas'd thy haunts I seek,
 On wild Helvetia's⁸ mountains bleak :
 (Where, when the favour'd of thy choice,
 The daring archer heard thy voice ;
 Forth from his eyrie rous'd in dread,
 The rav'ning eagle northward fled.)
 Or dwell in willow'd meads more near,
 With those⁹ to whom thy stork is dear :
 Those whom the rod of Alva bruis'd,
 Whose crown a British queen¹⁰ refus'd !
 The magic works, thou feel'st the strains,
 One holier name alone remains ;
 The perfect spell shall then avail,
 Hail nymph, ador'd by Britain, hail !

ANTISTROPHE.

Beyond the measure vast of thought,
 The works, the wizzard Time has wrought !

⁸ Switzerland.

⁹ The Dutch, amongst whom there are very severe penalties for those who are convicted of killing this bird. They are kept tame in almost all their towns, and particularly at the Hague, of the arms of which they make a part. The common people of Holland are said to entertain a superstitious sentiment, that if the whole species of them should become extinct, they should lose their liberties.

¹⁰ Queen Elizabeth.

The Gaul, 'tis held of antique story,
 Saw Britain link'd to his now adverse strand¹¹,
 No sea between, nor cliff sublime and hoary,
 He pass'd with unwet feet thro' all our land.
 To the blown Baltic then, they say,
 The wild waves found another way,
 Where Orcas howls, his wolfish mountains rounding;
 Till all the banded west at once 'gan rise,
 A wide wild storm e'en nature's self confounding,
 With'ring her giant sons with strange uncouth
 surprise.

This pillar'd earth so firm and wide,
 By winds and inward labours torn,
 In thunders dread was push'd aside,
 And down the should'ring billows born.
 And see, like gems, her laughing train,
 The little isles on ev'ry side,
 Mona¹², once hid from those who search the main,
 Where thousand elfin shapes abide,

¹¹ This tradition is mentioned by several of our old historians. Some naturalists too have endeavoured to support the probability of the fact by arguments drawn from the correspondent disposition of the two opposite coasts. I do not remember that any poetical use has been hitherto made of it.

¹² There is a tradition in the Isle of Man, that a mermaid becoming enamoured of a young man of extraordinary beauty,

And Wight who checks the west'ring tide,
 For thee consenting Heav'n has each bestow'd,
 A fair attendant on her sov'reign pride:
 To thee this blest divorce she ow'd,
 For thou hast made her vales thy lov'd, thy last abode!

SECOND EPODE.

Then too, 'tis said, an hoary pile,
 'Midst the green navel of our isle,
 Thy shrine in some religious wood,
 O soul-enforcing goddess, stood!
 There oft the painted native's feet
 Were wont thy form celestial meet:
 Though now with hopeless toil we trace
 Time's backward rolls, to find its place;
 Whether the fiery-tressed Dane,
 Or Roman's self o'erturn'd the fane,

took an opportunity of meeting him one day as he walked on the shore, and opened her passion to him, but was received with a coldness, occasioned by his horror and surprise at her appearance. This, however, was so misconstrued by the sea lady, that in revenge for his treatment of her, she punished the whole island, by covering it with a mist; so that all who attempted to carry on any commerce with it, either never arrived at it, but wandered up and down the sea, or were on a sudden wrecked upon its cliffs.

Or in what heav'n-left age it fell,
 'Twere hard for modern song to tell.
 Yet still, if Truth those beams infuse,
 Which guide at once, and charm the Muse,
 Beyond yon braided clouds that lie,
 Paving the light-embroider'd sky,
 Amidst the bright pavilion'd plains,
 The beauteous model still remains.
 There, happier than in islands blest,
 Or bow'rs by spring or Hebe drest,
 The chiefs who fill our Albion's story,
 In warlike weeds, retir'd in glory,
 Hear their consorted Druids sing
 Their triumphs to th' immortal string.

How may the Poet now unfold
 What never tongue or numbers told ?
 How learn delighted, and amaz'd,
 What hands unknown that fabric rais'd ?
 E'en now before his favour'd eyes,
 In gothic pride, it seems to rise !
 Yet Græcia's graceful orders join,
 Majestic through the mix'd design ;
 The secret builder knew to choose
 Each sphere-found gem of richest hues :

Whate'er heav'n's purer mould contains,
 When nearer suns emblaze its veins ;
 There on the walls the patriot's sight
 May ever hang with fresh delight,
 And, grav'd with some prophetic rage,
 Read Albion's fame thro' ev'ry age.

Ye forms divine, ye laureat band,
 That near her inmost altar stand !
 Now sooth her, to her blissful train
 Blithe Concord's social form to gain :
 Concord, whose myrtle wand can steep
 E'en Anger's blood-shot eyes in sleep :
 Before whose breathing bosom's balm
 Rage drops his steel, and storms grow calm ;
 Her let our sires and matrons hoar
 Welcome to Britain's ravag'd shore ;
 Our youths, enamour'd of the fair,
 Play with the tangles of her hair,
 Till, in one loud applauding sound,
 The nations shout to her around,
 O how supremely art thou blest,
 Thou, lady—thou shalt rule the west !

ODE

TO A LADY ON THE DEATH OF COLONEL ROSS,
 IN THE ACTION OF FONTENOY.

Written in May, 1745.

WHILE, lost to all his former mirth,
 Britannia's genius bends to earth,
 And mourns the fatal day:
 While stain'd with blood he strives to tear
 Unseemly from his sea-green hair
 The wreaths of cheerful May:

The thoughts which musing Pity pays,
 And fond Remembrance loves to raise,
 Your faithful hours attend:
 Still Fancy to herself unkind,
 Awakes to grief the soften'd mind,
 And points the bleeding friend.

By rapid Scheld's descending wave
 His country's vows shall bless the grave,
 Where'er the youth is laid :
 That sacred spot the village hind
 With ev'ry sweetest turf shall bind,
 And Peace protect the shade.

Blest youth, regardful of thy doom,
 Aërial hands shall build thy tomb,
 With shadowy trophies crown'd :
 Whilst Honour bath'd in tears shall rove
 To sigh thy name through ev'ry grove,
 And call his heroes round.

The warlike dead of ev'ry age,
 Who fill the fair recording page,
 Shall leave their sainted rest ;
 And, half-reclining on his spear,
 Each wond'ring chief by turns appear,
 To hail the blooming guest.

Old Edward's sons, unknown to yield,
 Shall crowd from Cressy's laurel'd field,

And gaze with fix'd delight;
 Again for Britain's wrongs they feel,
 Again they snatch the gleamy steel,
 And wish th' avenging fight.

But lo, where, sunk in deep despair,
 Her garments torn, her bosom bare,
 Impatient Freedom lies!
 Her matted tresses madly spread,
 To ev'ry sod, which wraps the dead,
 She turns her joyless eyes.

Ne'er shall she leave that lowly ground
 Till notes of triumph bursting round
 Proclaim her reign restor'd :
 Till William seek the sad retreat,
 And bleeding at her sacred feet,
 Present the sated sword.

If, weak to sooth so soft an heart,
 These pictur'd glories nought impart,
 To dry thy constant tear:
 If yet, in Sorrow's distant eye,
 Expos'd and pale thou see'st him lie,
 Wild War insulting near:

Where'er from time thou court'st relief,
The Muse shall still, with social grief,

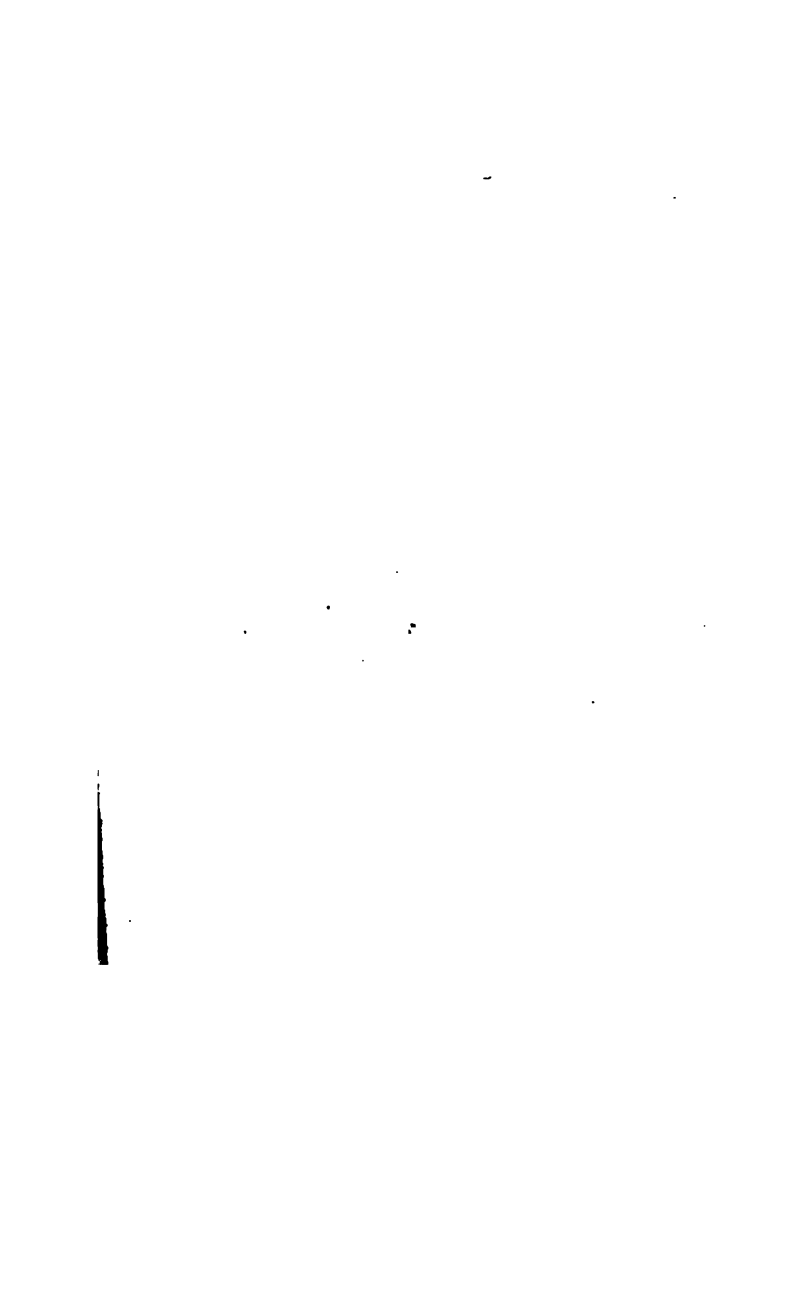
Her gentlest promise keep :
E'en humble Harting's cottag'd vale
Shall learn the sad repeated tale,
And bid her shepherds weep.



Designed by J. M. W. Turner.

Engraved by J. M. W. Turner.

*"Ye Persian damsels he said, to you belong —
 Well may they please — the morals of my song."*



ODE TO EVENING.

Fraught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
 Lay hope, O pensive Eve, to sooth thine ear,
 Like thy own brawling springs,
 Thy springs, and dying gales;

Nymph reserv'd, while now the bright-hair'd sun
 ts in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
 With brede ethereal wove,
 O'erhang his wavy bed :

ow air is hush'd, save where the weak-ey'd bat
 'ith short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing;
 Or where the beetle winds
 His small but sullen horn,

oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
 gainst the pilgrim borne in heedless hum :
 Now teach me, maid compos'd,
 To breathe some soften'd strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy dark'ning vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit ;

As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial lov'd return !

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreaths her brows with sedge,
And sheds the fresh'ning dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene;
Or find some ruin, 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or, if chill blust'ring winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That, from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

and hamlets brown; and dim-discover'd spires;
 and hears their simple bell; and marks o'er all
 Thy dewy fingers draw
 The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his show'rs, as oft he wont,
 and bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
 While Summer loves to sport
 Beneath thy ling'ring light;

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
 or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
 Affrights thy shrinking train,
 And rudely rends thy robes;

so long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
 shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
 Thy gentlest influence own,
 And love thy fav'rite name!

ODE TO PEACE.

O THOU, who bad'st thy turtles bear
 Swift from his grasp thy golden hair,
 And sought'st thy native skies;
 When War, by vultures drawn from far,
 To Britain bent his iron car,
 And bade his storms arise!

Tir'd of his rude tyrannic sway,
 Our youth shall fix some festive day,
 His sullen shrines to burn:
 But thou who hear'st the turning spheres,
 What sounds may charm thy partial ears,
 And gain thy blest return!

O Peace, thy injur'd robes up-bind!
 O rise! and leave not one behind
 Of all thy beamy train!
 The British Lion, goddess sweet,
 Lies stretch'd on earth, to kiss thy feet,
 And own thy holier reign.

Let others court thy transient smile,
But come to grace thy western isle,
By warlike Honour led;
And, while around her ports rejoice,
While all her sons adore thy choice,
With him for ever wed!

THE MANNERS.

AN ODE.

FAREWELL, for clearer ken design'd,
 The dim-discover'd tracts of mind;
 Truths which, from action's paths retir'd,
 My silent search in vain requir'd!
 No more my sail that deep explores;
 No more I search those magic shores;
 What regions part the world of soul,
 Or whence thy streams, Opinion, roll:
 If e'er I round such fairy field,
 Some pow'r impart the spear and shield
 At which the wizzard Passions fly;
 By which the giant Follies die!

Farewell the porch whose roof is seen
 Arch'd with th' enlivening olive's green:
 Where Science, prank'd in tissu'd vest,
 By Reason, Pride, and Fancy, drest,

Comes, like a bride, so trim array'd,
To wed with Doubt in Plato's shade.

Youth of the quick uncheated sight,
Thy walks, Observance, more invite!
O thou who lov'st that ampler range,
Where life's wide prospects round thee change,
And, with her mingling sons allied,
Throw'st the prattling page aside,
To me, in converse sweet, impart
To read in man the native heart;
To learn, where Science sure is found,
From nature as she lives around;
And, gazing oft her mirror true,
By turns each shifting image view!
Till meddling Art's officious lore
Reverse the lessons taught before;
Alluring from a safer rule,
To dream in her enchanted school:
Thou, Heav'n, whate'er of great we boast,
Hast blest this social science most.

Retiring hence to thoughtful cell,
As Fancy breathes her potent spell,

Not vain she finds the charming task,
 In pageant quaint, in motley mask ;
 Behold, before her musing eyes,
 The countless Manners round her rise ;
 While, ever varying as they pass,
 To some Contempt applies her glass ;
 With these the white-rob'd maids combine ;
 And those the laughing Satyrs join !
 But who is he whom now she views,
 In robe of wild contending hues ?
 Thou by the Passions nurs'd ; I greet
 The comic sock that binds thy feet !
 O Humour, thou whose name is known
 To Britain's favour'd isle alone :
 Me too amidst thy band admit ;
 There where the young-ey'd healthful Wit,
 (Whose jewels in his crisped hair
 Are plac'd each other's beams to share ;
 Whom no delights from thee divide)
 In laughter loos'd, attends thy side !

By old Miletus¹, who so long
 Has ceas'd his love-inwoven song ;

¹ Alluding to the Milesian tales, some of the earliest romances.

By all you taught the Tuscan maids,
 In chang'd Italia's modern shades;
 By him² whose knight's distinguish'd name
 Refin'd a nation's lust of fame;
 Whose tales e'en now, with echoes sweet,
 Castalia's Moorish hills repeat;
 Or him³ whom Seine's blue nymphs deplore,
 In watchet weeds on Gallia's shore;
 Who drew the sad Sicilian maid,
 By virtues in her sire betray'd.

O Nature boon, from whom proceed
 Each forceful thought, each prompted deed;
 If but from thee I hope to feel,
 On all my heart imprint thy seal!
 Let some retreating Cynic find
 Those oft-turn'd scrolls I leave behind:
 The Sports and I this hour agree,
 To rove thy scene-full world with thee!

² Cervantes.

³ Monsieur Le Sage, author of the incomparable *Adventures of Gil Blas de Santillane*, who died in Paris in the year 1745.

THE PASSIONS.

AN ODE FOR MUSIC.

WHEN Music, heavenly maid, was young,
 While yet in early Greece she sung,
 The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
 Throng'd around her magic cell,
 Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
 Possest beyond the Muse's painting;
 By turns they felt the glowing mind
 Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, refin'd;
 Till once, 'tis said, when all were fir'd,
 Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspir'd,
 From the supporting myrtles round
 They snatch'd her instruments of sound;
 And, as they oft had heard apart
 Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
 Each (for Madness rul'd the hour)
 Would prove his own expressive power,

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
 Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
 And back recoil'd he knew not why,
 E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd: his eyes on fire,
 In lightnings, own'd his secret stings:
 In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
 And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair
 Low, sullen sounds his grief beguil'd;
 A solemn, strange, and mingled air;
 'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
 What was thy delighted measure?
 Still it whisper'd promis'd pleasure,
 And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
 Still would her touch the strain prolong;
 And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
 She call'd on Echo still, through all the song;
 And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
 A soft responsive voice was heard at every close;

And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden hair.
And longer had she sung;—but, with a frown,

Revenge impatient rose :

He threw his blood-stain'd sword, in thunder, down ;

And, with a with'ring look,

The war-denouncing trumpet took,

And blew a blast so loud and dread,

Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe !

And, ever and anon, he beat

The doubling drum, with furious heat ;

And, though sometimes, each dreary pause between,

Dejected Pity, at his side,

Her soul-subduing voice applied,

Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,

While each strain'd ball of sight seem bursting from
his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd ;

Sad proof of thy distressful state !

Of diff'ring themes the veering song was mix'd ;

And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on

Hate.

With eyes up-rais'd, as one inspir'd,

Pale Melancholy sat retir'd ;

And, from her wild sequester'd seat,
 In notes by distance made more sweet,
 Pour'd through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
 And, dashing soft from rocks around,
 Bubbling runnels join'd the sound;
 Through glades and glooms the mingled measure
 stole,
 Or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
 Round an holy calm diffusing,
 Love of peace, and lonely musing,
 In hollow murmurs died away.

But O! how alter'd was its sprightlier tone
 When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
 Her bow across her shoulder flung,
 Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
 Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
 The hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known.
 The oak-crown'd Sisters, and their chaste-ey'd
 Queen,
 Satyrs and Sylvan Boys, were seen,
 Peeping from forth their alleys green:
 Brown Exercise rejoic'd to hear;
 And Sport leapt up, and seiz'd his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial:
 He, with viny crown advancing,
 First to the lively pipe his hand address;
 But soon he saw the brisk awak'ning viol,
 Whose sweet entrancing voice he lov'd the best:
 They would have thought who heard the strain
 They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids,
 Amidst the festal sounding shades,
 To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
 While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
 Love fram'd with Mirth a gay fantastic round:
 Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
 And he, amidst his frolic play,
 As if he would the charming air repay,
 Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
 Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
 Why, goddess! why, to us denied,
 Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
 As, in that lov'd Athenian bower,
 You learn'd an all-commanding power,
 Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endear'd,
 Can well recall what then it heard.

Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording Sister's page—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;
E'en all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled world of sound—
O bid our vain endeavours cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece:
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

AN EPISTLE,

ADDRESSED TO SIR THOMAS HANMER, ON HIS EDITION OF
SHAKSPEARE'S WORKS.

WHILE, born to bring the Muse's happier days,
 A patriot's hand protects a poet's lays,
 While nurs'd by you she sees her myrtles bloom,
 Green and unwither'd o'er his honour'd tomb;
 Excuse her doubts, if yet she fears to tell
 What secret transports in her bosom swell.
 With conscious awe she hears the critic's fame,
 And blushing hides her wreath at Shakspeare's name:
 Hard was the lot those injur'd strains endur'd,
 Unown'd by Science, and by years obscur'd:
 Fair Fancy wept; and echoing sighs confess'd
 A fixt despair in every tuneful breast.
 Not with more grief the afflicted swains appear,
 When wintry winds deform the plenteous year;
 When ling'ring frosts the ruin'd seats invade
 Where Peace resorted, and the Graces play'd.

Each rising art by just gradation moves :
 Toil builds on toil ; and age on age improves :
 The Muse alone unequal dealt her rage,
 And grac'd with noblest pomp her earliest stage.
 Preserv'd through time, the speaking scenes impart
 Each changeful wish of Phædra's tortur'd heart ;
 Or paint the curse that mark'd the Theban's¹ reign ;
 A bed incestuous, and a father slain.
 With kind concern our pitying eyes o'erflow ;
 Trace the sad tale, and own another's woe.

To Rome remov'd, with wit secure to please,
 The comic Sisters kept their native ease :
 With jealous fear, declining Greece beheld
 Her own Menander's art almost excell'd ;
 But every Muse essay'd to raise in vain
 Some labour'd rival of her tragic strain :
 Illyssus' laurels, though transferr'd with toil,
 Droop'd their fair leaves, nor knew the unfriendly soil.

As Arts expir'd, resistless Dulness rose ;
 Goths, priests, or Vandals,—all were Learning's foes.

¹ The *Œdipus* of Sophocles.

Till Julius' first recall'd each exil'd maid;
 And Cosmo own'd them in the Etrurian shade:
 Then, deeply skill'd in love's engaging theme,
 The soft Provençal pass'd to Arno's stream:
 With graceful ease the wanton lyre he strung;
 Sweet flow'd the lays—but love was all he sung.
 The gay description could not fail to move;
 For, led by nature, all are friends to love.

But Heaven, still various in its works, decreed
 The perfect boast of time should last succeed.
 The beauteous union must appear at length,
 Of Tuscan fancy, and Athenian strength:
 One greater Muse Eliza's reign adorn,
 And even a Shakspeare to her fame be born!

Yet ah! so bright her morning's opening ray,
 In vain our Britain hop'd an equal day!
 No second growth the western isle could bear,
 At once exhausted with too rich a year.
 Too nicely Jonson knew the critic's part;
 Nature in him was almost lost in art.

² Julius II. the immediate predecessor of Leo X.

Of softer mould the gentle Fletcher came,
 The next in order as the next in name.
 With pleas'd attention, 'midst his scenes we find
 Each glowing thought that warms the female mind;
 Each melting sigh, and every tender tear;
 The lover's wishes, and the virgin's fear.
 His³ every strain the Smiles and Graces own;
 But stronger Shakspeare felt for man alone:
 Drawn by his pen, our ruder passions stand
 The unrivall'd picture of his early hand.

With⁴ gradual steps and slow, exacter France
 Saw Art's fair empire o'er her shores advance:
 By length of toil a bright perfection knew,
 Correctly bold, and just in all she drew:
 Till late Corneille, with Lucan's⁵ spirit fir'd,
 Breath'd the free strain, as Rome and he inspir'd:

³ Their characters are thus distinguished by Mr. Dryden.

⁴ About the time of Shakspeare, the poet Hardy was in great repute in France. He wrote, according to Fontenelle, six hundred plays. The French poets after him applied themselves in general to the correct improvement of the stage, which was almost totally disregarded by those of our own country, Jonson excepted.

⁵ The favourite author of the elder Corneille.

And classic judgment gain'd to sweet Racine
The temperate strength of Maro's chaster line.

But wilder far the British laurel spread,
And wreaths less artful crown our Poet's head.
Yet he alone to every scene could give
The historian's truth, and bid the manners live.
Wak'd at his call I view, with glad surprise,
Majestic forms of mighty monarchs rise.
There Henry's trumpets spread their loud alarms;
And laurell'd Conquest waits her hero's arms.
Here gentle Edward claims a pitying sigh,
Scarce born to honours, and so soon to die!
Yet shall thy throne, unhappy infant, bring
No beam of comfort to the guilty king:
The time⁶ shall come when Glo'ster's heart sh
bleed,
In life's last hours, with horror of the deed;
When dreary visions shall at last present
Thy vengeful image in the midnight tent:
Thy hand unseen the secret death shall bear;
Blunt the weak sword, and break th' oppressive spe

⁶ Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta, &c. VIRG.

Where'er we turn, by Fancy charm'd, we find
 Some sweet illusion of the cheated mind.
 Oft, wild of wing, she calls the soul to rove
 With humbler nature, in the rural grove;
 Where swains contented own the quiet scene,
 And twilight fairies tread the circled green:
 Dress'd by her hand, the woods and valleys smile;
 And Spring diffusive decks th' enchanted isle.

O, more than all in powerful genius blest,
 Come, take thine empire o'er the willing breast!
 Whate'er the wounds this youthful heart shall feel,
 Thy songs support me, and thy morals heal!
 There every thought the Poet's warmth may raise;
 There native music dwells in all the lays.
 O might some verse with happiest skill persuade
 Expressive Picture to adopt thine aid!
 What wondrous draught might rise from every page!
 What other Raphaels charm a distant age!

Methinks e'en now I view some free design
 Where breathing Nature lives in every line:
 Chaste and subdu'd the modest lights decay,
 Steal into shades, and mildly melt away.

And see where Anthony⁷, in tears approv'd,
 Guards the pale relics of the chief he lov'd :
 O'er the cold corse the warrior seems to bend,
 Deep sunk in grief, and mourns his murder'd friend!
 Still as they press, he calls on all around,
 Lifts the torn robe, and points the bleeding wound.

But who⁸ is he whose brows exalted bear
 A wrath impatient and a fiercer air?
 Awake to all that injur'd worth can feel,
 On his own Rome he turns th' avenging steel;
 Yet shall not war's insatiate fury fall
 (So heaven ordains it) on the destin'd wall.
 See the fond mother, 'midst the plaintive train,
 Hung on his knees, and prostrate on the plain!
 Touch'd to the soul, in vain he strives to hide
 The son's affection, in the Roman's pride:
 O'er all the man conflicting passions rise;
 Rage grasps the sword, while Pity melts the eyes.

Thus, generous Critic, as thy Bard inspires,
 The sister Arts shall nurse their drooping fires;

⁷ See the Tragedy of Julius Cæsar.

⁸ Coriolanus. See Mr. Spence's Dialogue on the Odyssey.

Each from his scenes their stores alternate bring;
 Blend the fair tint, or wake the vocal string:
 Those Sibyl-leaves, the sport of every wind,
 (For Poets ever were a careless kind)
 By thee dispos'd, no farther toil demand,
 But, just to Nature, own thy forming hand.

So spread o'er Greece, the harmonious whole un-
 known,
 E'en Homer's numbers charm'd by parts alone.
 Their own Ulysses scarce had wander'd more,
 By winds and waters cast on every shore:
 When, rais'd by fate, some former Hammer join'd
 Each beauteous image of the boundless mind;
 And bade, like thee, his Athens ever claim
 A fond alliance with the Poet's name.

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE.

SUNG BY GUIDERUS AND ARVIRAGUS OVER FIDELE,
SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD.

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet of earliest bloom,
And rifle all the breathing spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No wither'd witch shall here be seen;
No goblins lead their nightly crew:
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew !

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gather'd flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
In tempests shake the sylvan cell;
Or 'midst the chase, on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell;

Each lonely scene shall thee restore;
For thee the tear be duly shed;
Belov'd till life can charm no more,
And mourn'd till Pity's self be dead.

O D E
ON THE
DEATH OF MR. THOMSON.

THE SCENE OF THE FOLLOWING STANZAS IS SUPPOSED TO
LIE ON THE THAMES, NEAR RICHMOND.

IN yonder grave a Druid lies,
Where slowly winds the stealing wave!
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise,
To deck its poet's sylvan grave!

In yon deep bed of whispering reeds
His airy harp¹ shall now be laid;
That he whose heart in sorrow bleeds
May love through life the soothing shade.

Then maids and youths shall linger here;
And, while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in Pity's ear
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

¹ The harp of Æolus, of which see a description in the
Castle of Indolence.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore,
 When Thames in summer wreaths is drest;
 And oft suspend the dashing oar,
 To bid his gentle spirit rest!

And, oft as ease and health retire
 To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
 The friend shall view yon whitening² spire,
 And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

But thou who own'st that earthly bed,
 Ah! what will every dirge avail!
 Or tears which Love and Pity shed,
 That mourn beneath the gliding sail!

Yet lives there one whose heedless eye
 Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near!
 With him, sweet Bard, may Fancy die;
 And Joy desert the blooming year.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide
 No sedge-crown'd Sisters now attend,
 Now waft me from the green hill's side
 Whose cold turf hides the buried friend!

² Richmond Church, in which Thomson was buried.

And see, the fairy valleys fade;
 Dun Night has veil'd the solemn view !
 Yet once again, dear parted shade,
 Meek Nature's Child, again adieu !

The genial³ meads, assign'd to bless
 Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom ;
 There hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress,
 With simple hands, thy rural tomb.

Long, long, thy stone and pointed clay
 Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes :
 O! vales, and wild woods, shall he say,
 In yonder grave your Druid lies !

³ Mr. Thomson resided in the neighbourhood of Richmond some time before his death.

VERSES

WRITTEN ON A PAPER WHICH CONTAINED A PIECE OF
BRIDE-CAKE.

YE curious hands, that hid from vulgar eyes,
By search profane shall find this hallow'd cake,
With virtue's awe forbear the sacred prize,
Nor dare a theft, for love and pity's sake!

This precious relic, form'd by magic power,
Beneath the shepherd's haunted pillow laid,
Was meant by love to charm the silent hour,
The secret present of a matchless maid.

The Cyprian queen, at Hymen's fond request,
Each nice ingredient chose with happiest art;
Fears, sighs, and wishes of th' enamour'd breast,
And pains that please, are mixt in every part.

With rosy hand the spicy fruit she brought,
From Paphian hills, and fair Cytherea's isle;
And temper'd sweet with these the melting thought,
The kiss ambrosial, and the yielding smile.

Ambiguous looks, that scorn and yet relent,
 Denials mild, and firm unalter'd truth ;
 Reluctant pride, and amorous faint consent,
 And meeting ardours, and exulting youth.

Sleep, wayward God ! hath sworn, while these remain
 With flattering dreams to dry his nightly tear,
 And cheerful Hope, so oft invoc'd in vain,
 With fairy songs shall sooth his pensive ear.

If, bound by vows to Friendship's gentle side,
 And fond of soul, thou hop'st an equal grace,
 If youth or maid thy joys and griefs divide,
 O, much entreated leave this fatal place !

Sweet Peace, who long hath shunn'd my plaintive
 day,
 Consents at length to bring me short delight,
 Thy careless steps may scare her doves away,
 And grief with raven note usurp the night.

O D E

ON THE

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS
OF SCOTLAND;*CONSIDERED AS THE SUBJECT OF POETRY.*

INSCRIBED TO MR. JOHN HOME.

HOME, thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads
 long
 Have seen thee lingering with a fond delay,
 Mid those soft friends, whose hearts, some future
 day,
 Shall melt, perhaps, to hear thy tragic song¹.
 Go, not unmindful of that cordial youth²
 Whom, long endear'd, thou leav'st by Lavant's side;
 Together let us wish him lasting truth,
 And joy untainted, with his destin'd bride.

¹ How truly did Collins predict Home's tragic powers!

² A gentleman of the name of Barrow, who introduced Home to Collins.

Go! nor regardless, while these numbers boast
 My short-liv'd bliss, forget my social name;
 But think, far off, how, on the southern coast,
 I met thy friendship with an equal flame!
 Fresh to that soil thou turn'st, where every vale
 Shall prompt the Poet, and his song demand:
 To thee thy copious subjects ne'er shall fail;
 Thou need'st but take thy pencil to thy hand,
 And paint what all believe, who own thy genial land.

There, must thou wake perforce thy Doric quill;
 'Tis Fancy's land to which thou sett'st thy feet;
 Where still, 'tis said, the fairy people meet,
 Beneath each birken shade, on mead or hill.
 There, each trim lass, that skims the milky store,
 To the swart tribes their creamy bowls allots;
 By night they sip it round the cottage door,
 While airy minstrels warble jocund notes.
 There, every herd, by sad experience, knows
 How, wing'd with fate, their elf-shot arrows fly,
 When the sick ewe her summer food foregoes,
 Or, stretch'd on earth, the heart-smit heifers lie,
 Such airy beings awe th' untutor'd swain:
 Nor thou, though learn'd, his homelier thoughts
 neglect;

et thy sweet muse the rural faith sustain ;
 These are the themes of simple, sure effect,
 hat add new conquests to her boundless reign,
 And fill, with double force, her heart-commanding
 strain.

When yet preserv'd, how often may'st thou hear,
 Where to the pole the Boreal mountains run,
 Taught by the father, to his listening son,
 Strange lays, whose power had charm'd a Spenser's ear.
 At every pause, before thy mind possest,
 Old Runic bards shall seem to rise around,
 With uncouth lyres, in many-colour'd vest,
 Their matted hair with boughs fantastic crown'd :
 Whether thou bid'st the well-taught hind repeat
 The choral dirge, that mourns some chieftain brave,
 When every shrieking maid her bosom beat,
 And strew'd with choicest herbs his scented grave !
 Or whether, sitting in the shepherd's shiel³,
 Thou hear'st some sounding tale of war's alarms ;
 When at the bugle's call, with fire and steel,
 The sturdy clans pour'd forth their brawny swarms,
 And hostile brothers met, to prove each other's arms.

³ A summer hut, built in the high part of the mountains, to send their flocks in the warm season, when the pasture is fine.

'Tis thine to sing, how, framing hideous spells,

In Sky's lone isle, the gifted wizard-sear,

Lodg'd in the wintry cave with Fate's fell spear,

Or in the depth of Uist's dark forest dwells:

How they, whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
With their own vision oft astonish'd droop,

When, o'er the wat'ry strath, or quaggy moss,
They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop.

Or, if in sports, or on the festive green,
Their destin'd glance some fated youth descry,

Who now, perhaps, in lusty vigour seen,
And rosy health, shall soon lamented die.

For them the viewless forms of air obey;
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair:

They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless, oft like moody madness, stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

To monarchs dear⁴, some hundred miles astray,

Oft have they seen Fate give the fatal blow!

⁴ The fifth stanza, and the half of the sixth, in Dr. Carlyle's copy, printed in the first volume of the "Transactions" of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, being deficient, have been supplied by Mr. Mackenzie; whose lines are here annexed, for the purpose of comparison, and to do justice to the elegant author of the *Man of Feeling*:

The seer, in Sky, shriek'd as the blood did flow,
When headless Charles warm on the scaffold lay !

“ Or on some bellying rock that shades the deep,
They view the lurid signs that cross the sky,
Where in the west, the brooding tempests lie ;
And hear the first, faint, rustling pennons sweep.
Or in the arched cave, where deep and dark
The broad, unbroken billows heave and swell,
In horrid musings wrapt, they sit to mark
The lab’ring moon ; or list the nightly yell
Of that dread spirit, whose gigantic form
The seer’s entranced eye can well survey,
Through the dim air who guides the driving storm,
And points the wretched bark its destin’d prey.
Or him who hovers on his flagging wing,
O’er the dire whirlpool, that, in ocean’s waste,
Draws instant down whate’er devoted thing
The falling breeze within its reach hath plac’d—
The distant seaman hears, and flies with trembling haste.
Or, if on land the fiend exerts his sway,
Silent he broods o’er quicksand, bog, or fen,
Far from the sheltering roof and haunts of men,
When witch’d darkness shuts the eye of day,
And shrouds each star that wont to cheer the night ;
Or, if the drifted snow perplex the way,
With treacherous gleam he lures the fated wight,
And leads him floundering on and quite astray*.”

* Shortly after these lines by Mr. Mackenzie had been published, the following were produced ; which many readers probably will think have at least as much of Collins’s manner in them :

“ For oft when Eve hath spread her dusky veil,
And hid each star that wont to cheer the night,

As Boreas threw his young Aurora³ forth,
 In the first year of the first George's reign,
 And battles rag'd in welkin of the North,
 They mourn'd in air, fell, fell rebellion slain!

³ By young Aurora, Collins undoubtedly meant the first appearance of the northern lights, which happened about the year 1715; at least, it is most highly probable, from this peculiar circumstance, that no ancient writer whatever has taken any notice of them, nor even any one modern, previous to the above period.

In some deep glen remote from human sight,
 The grisly wizard his associates hail.
 There, at the thrilling verse, and charmed spell,
 Fantastic shapes and direful shadows throng;
 Night's sober ear piercing with hideous yell,
 While in the goblin round they troop along.
 Thence each betakes him to his several toil;
 To dive, to fly, to ride the wintry blast,
 To dig the mine, to cleave the church-yard soil,
 Or rake the bottom of the watry waste.
 Each powerful drug, with more than mortal skill,
 Where'er bestow'd, or hid from searching eye,
 Selecting heedful of their tasker's will:
 Nor cease their labours till the dawn descry
 Their hated impious work, and reddens all the sky.

"Nor wilt thou leave for other bards to sing,
 The ruthless spirit of the angry flood;
 How, at grey eve, in fell and crafty mood,
 O'er fen and lake he shakes his foggy wing:
 Or when the curfew with his sullen note,
 Unchains, to roam the earth, each elfin sprite,
 Like some drear lamp, from out the quaggy moat,
 The fiend shines forth, to lure th' incautious wight."

And as, of late, they joy'd in Preston's fight,
 Saw, at sad Falkirk, all their hopes near crown'd!
 They rav'd! divining, through their second sight⁶.
 Pale, red Culloden, where these hopes were drown'd!
 Illustrious William⁷! Britain's guardian name!
 One William sav'd us from a tyrant's stroke;
 He, for a sceptre, gain'd heroic fame,
 But thou, more glorious, Slavery's chain hast broke,
 To reign a private man, and bow to Freedom's yoke!

These, too, thou'lt sing! for well thy magic muse
 Can to the topmost heaven of grandeur soar;
 Or stoop to wail the swain that is no more!
 Ah, homely swains! your homeward steps ne'er lose;
 Let not dank Will⁸ mislead you to the heath;
 Dancing in mirky night, o'er fen and lake,
 He glows, to draw you downward to your death,
 In his bewitch'd, low, marshy, willow brake!

⁶ Second sight is the term that is used for the divination of the Highlanders.

⁷ The late duke of Cumberland, who defeated the Pretender at the battle of Culloden.

⁸ A fiery meteor, called by various names, such as Will with the Wisp, Jack with the Lantern, &c. It hovers in the air over marshy and fenny places.

What though far off, from some dark dell espied,
 His glimmering mazes cheer th' excursive sight,
 Yet turn, ye wanderers, turn your steps aside,
 Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light;
 For watchful, lurking, 'mid th' unrustling reed,
 At those mirk hours the wily monster lies,
 And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
 And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
 If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch
 surprise.

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest, indeed!
 Whom late bewilder'd in the dank, dark fen,
 Far from his flocks, and smoking hamlet, then!
 To that sad spot where hums the sedgy weed:
 On him, enrag'd, the fiend, in angry mood,
 Shall never look with Pity's kind concern,
 But instant, furious, raise the whelming flood
 O'er its drown'd banks, forbidding all return!
 Or, if he meditate his wish'd escape,
 'To some dim hill, that seems uprising near,
 To his faint eye, the grim and grisly shape,
 In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear.
 Meantime the watery surge shall round him rise,

Pour'd sudden forth from every swelling source !

**What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs ?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthful force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless
corse !**

For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait,

Or wander forth to meet him on his way ;

For him in vain at to-fall of the day,

His babes shall linger at th' unclosing gate !

Ah, ne'er shall he return ! Alone, if Night,

Her travel'd limbs in broken slumbers steep !

With drooping willows drest, his mournful sprite

Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep :

Then he, perhaps, with moist and watery hand,

Shall fondly seem to press her shuddering check,

And with his blue-swoln face before her stand,

And, shivering cold, these piteous accents speak :

“ Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils, pursue,

“ At dawn or dusk, industrious as before ;

“ Nor e'er of me one helpless thought renew,

“ While I lie weltering on the osier'd shore,

**“ Drown'd by the Kelpie's' wrath, nor e'er shall aid
thee more !”**

’ The water fiend.

Unbounded is thy range; with varied skill

Thy muse may, like those feathery tribes which
spring

From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,

To that hoar pile¹⁰ which still its ruins shows:
In whose small vaults a pigmy-folk is found,

Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wond'ring, from the hallow'd
ground!

Or thither¹¹, where beneath the show'ry west,

The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid;
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest,

No slaves revere them, and no wars invade:
Yet frequent now, at midnight solemn hour,

The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sovereign power,
In pageant robes, and wreath'd with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs ærial council hold.

¹⁰ One of the Hebrides is called the Isle of Pigmies; where it is reported, that several miniature bones of the human species have been dug up in the ruins of a chapel there.

¹¹ Icolmkill, one of the Hebrides, where near sixty of the ancient Scottish, Irish, and Norwegian kings are interred.

But, oh, o'er all, forget not Kilda's race,
 On whose bleak rocks, which brave the wasting tides,
 Fair Nature's daughter, Virtue, yet abides.
 Go! just, as they, their blameless manners trace!
 Then to my ear transmit some gentle song,
 Of those whose lives are yet sincere and plain,
 Their bounded walks the rugged cliffs along,
 And all their prospect but the wintry main.
 With sparing temperance, at the needful time,
 They drain the scented spring; or, hunger-prest,
 Along th' Atlantic rock, undreading climb,
 And of its eggs despoil the solan's¹² nest.
 Thus, blest in primal innocence they live,
 Suffic'd, and happy with that frugal fare
 Which tasteful toil and hourly danger give.
 Hard is their shallow soil, and bleak and bare;
 Nor ever vernal bee was heard to murmur there!

Nor need'st thou blush that such false themes engage
 Thy gentle mind, of fairer stores possess;
 For not alone they touch the village breast,
 But fill'd, in elder time, th' historic page.

¹² An aquatic bird like a goose, on the eggs of which the inhabitants of St. Kilda, another of the Hebrides, chiefly subsist.

There, Shakspeare's self, with every garland
crown'd,

Flew to those fairy climes his fancy sheen,

In musing hour; his wayward sisters found,
And with their terrors drest the magic scene.

From them he sung, when, 'mid his bold design,
Before the Scot, afflicted, and aghast!

The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant pass'd.

Proceed! nor quit the tales which, simply told,
Could once so well my answering bosom pierce;

Proceed, in forceful sounds, and colour bold,
The native legends of thy land rehearse;
To such adapt thy lyre, and suit thy pow'rful verse.

In scenes like these, which, daring to depart

From sober truth, are still to Nature true,
And call forth fresh delight to Fancy's view,
Th' heroic muse employ'd her Tasso's art!

How have I trembled, when, at Tancred's stroke,
Its gushing blood the gaping cypress pour'd!

When each live plant with mortal accents spoke,
And the wild blast upheav'd the vanish'd sword!

How have I sat, when pip'd the pensive wind,
To hear his harp by British Fairfax strung!

Prevailing poet! whose undoubting mind
Believ'd the magic wonders which he sung!

Hence, at each sound, imagination glows!
Hence, at each picture, vivid life starts here!

Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows!
Melting it flows, pure, murmuring, strong, and clear,
And fills th' impassion'd heart, and wins th' harmonious ear!

All hail, ye scenes that o'er my soul prevail!
Ye splendid friths and lakes, which, far away,
Are by smooth Annan¹³ fill'd, or past'ral Tay¹³,
Or Don's¹³ romantic springs, at distance hail!
The time shall come, when I, perhaps, may tread
Your lowly glens¹⁴, o'erhung with spreading broom;
Or, o'er your stretching heaths, by Fancy led;
Or o'er your mountains creep, in awful gloom!
Then will I dress once more the faded bower,
Where Jonson¹⁵ sat in Drummond's classic shade;
Or crop, from Tiviotdale, each lyric flower,
And mourn, on Yarrow's banks, where Willy's laid!

¹³ Three rivers in Scotland.

¹⁴ Vallies.

¹⁵ Ben Jonson paid a visit on foot, in 1619, to the Scotch poet Drummond, at his seat of Hawthornden, within four miles of Edinburgh.

Meantime, ye powers that on the plains which bore
 The cordial youth, on Lothian's plains¹⁶, attend!—
 Where'er Home dwells, on hill, or lowly moor,
 To him I lose your kind protection lend,
 And, touch'd with love like mine, preserve my absent
 friend¹⁷!

¹⁶ Barrow, it seems, was at the Edinburgh University, which is in the county of Lothian.

¹⁷ The following exquisite SUPPLEMENTAL STANZAS to the foregoing ODE, will be found to commemorate some striking Scottish superstitions omitted by COLLINS. They are the production of WILLIAM ERSKINE, Esq. Advocate, and form a Continuation of the Address, by Collins, to the Author of Douglas, exhorting him to celebrate the traditions of Scotland. They originally appeared in the Edinburgh Magazine for April, 1788.

“ Thy muse may tell, how, when at evening's close,
 To meet her love beneath the twilight shade,
 O'er many a broom-clad brae and heathy glade,
 In merry mood the village maiden goes,
 There, on a streamlet's margin as she lies,
 Chaunting some carol till her swain appears,
 With visage, deadly pale, in pensive guise,
 Beneath a wither'd fir his form he rears*!

* The wraith, or spectral appearance, of a person shortly to die, is a firm article in the creed of Scottish superstition. Nor is it unknown in our sister kingdom. See the story of the beautiful Lady Diana Rich. — *Aubrey's Miscellanies*, p. 89.

Shrieking and sad, she bends her irie flight,

When, mid dire heaths, where flits the taper blue,
The whilst the moon sheds dim a sickly light,

The airy funeral meets her blasted view!

When, trembling, weak, she gains her cottage low,

Where magpies scatter notes of presage wide,
Some one shall tell, while tears in torrents flow,

That, just when twilight dimm'd the green hill's side,
Far in his lonely sheil her hapless shepherd died.

“ Let these sad strains to lighter sounds give place !

Bid thy brisk viol warble measures gay !

For see ! recall'd by thy resistless lay,

Once more the Brownie shews his honest face.

Hail, from thy wanderings long, my much-lov'd sprite

Thou friend, thou lover of the lowly, hail !

Tell, in what realms thou sport'st thy merry night,

Trail'st the long mop, or whirl'st the mimic flail.

Where dost thou deck the much-disordered hall,

While the tired damsel in Elysium sleeps,

With early voice to drowsy workman call,

Or lull the dame while mirth his vigils keeps ?

'Twas thus in Caledonia's domes, 'tis said,

Thou ply'dst the kindly task in years of yore :

At last, in luckless hour, some erring maid

Spread in thy nightly cell of viands store :

Ne'er was thy form beheld among their mountains more*.

* The *Brownie* formed a class of beings, distinct in habit and disposition from the freakish and mischievous elves. He was meagre, shaggy, and wild in his appearance. Thus, Cleland, in his satire against the Highlanders, compares them to

' Faunes, or *brownies*, if ye will,
Or satyres come from Atlas hill.'



“ Then wake (for well thou can’st) that wondrous
 How, while around the thoughtless matrons sle:
 Soft o’er the floor the treacherous fairies creep,
 And bear the smiling infant far away :

‘ In the day time, he lurked in remote recesses of the which he delighted to haunt; and, in the night, sedulous himself in discharging any laborious task which he thought acceptable to the family, to whose service he had devoted. But, although, like Milton’s lubbar fiend, he loves to stretch the fire*, he does not drudge from the hope of recompence; on the contrary, so delicate is his attachment, that the offer of a particularly of food, infallibly occasions his disappearance

* ‘ —how the drudging goblin swet,
 To earn the cream-bowl, duly set;
 When, in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail had thrash’d the corn,
 That ten day-lab’rers could not end;
 Then lies him down the lubbar fiend
 And, stretch’d out all the chimney’s length,
 Basks at the fire his bary strength;
 And, crop-full, out of doors he flings,
 E’er the first cock his matin rings.

L’Allegro.

‘ When the menials in a Scottish family protracted their vigils at the kitchen fire, Brownie, weary of being excluded from the hearth, sometimes appeared at the door, seemed to watch their slumber, and thus admonished them—“ Gang a’ to your beds, dinna put out the wee *grieshock* (embers).”

† It is told of a Brownie, who haunted a border family, that the lady having fallen unexpectedly in labour, and the sage was ordered to ride to Jedburgh for the *sage femme*, shewing alertness in setting out, the familiar spirit alight on the great-linging domestic, rode to the town on the laird’s best horse.

How starts the nurse, when, for her lovely child,
 She sees at dawn a gaping idiot stare !
 O snatch the innocent from demons vilde,
 And save the parents fond from fell despair !
 In a deep cave the trusty menials wait,
 When from their hilly dens, at midnight's hour,
 Forth rush the airy elves in mimic state,
 And o'er the moon-light heath with swiftness scour :

turned with the midwife *en croupe*. During the short space of his absence, the Tweed, which they must necessarily ford, rose to a dangerous height. Brownie, who transported his charge with all the rapidity of the ghostly lover of *Leonora*, was not to be stopped by this obstacle. He plunged in with the terrified old lady, and landed her in safety where her services were wanted. Having put the horse into the stable where it was afterwards found in a woeful plight), he proceeded to the room of the servant, whose duty he had discharged; and, finding him just in the act of drawing on his boots, he administered to him a most merciless drubbing with his own horse-whip. Such an important service excited the gratitude of the laird; who, understanding that Brownie had been heard to express a wish to have a green coat, ordered a vestment of that colour to be made, and left in his haunts. Brownie took away the green coat, but never was seen more. We may suppose, that, tired of his domestic drudgery, he went in his new livery to join the fairies.

' The last Brownie, known in Ettrick forest, resided in Bodsbeck, a wild and solitary spot, where he exercised his functions undisturbed, till the scrupulous devotion of an old lady induced her to *hire him away*, as it was termed, by placing in his haunt a porringer of milk and a piece of money. After receiving this hint to depart, he was heard the whole night to howl and cry, " Farewell to bonny Bodsbeck!" which he was compelled to abandon for ever.'

It seems no improbable conjecture, that the *Brownie* is a legitimate descendant of the *Lar Familiaris* of the ancients.

In glittering arms the little horsemen shine;
 Last, on a milk-white steed, with targe of gold,
 A fay of might appears, whose arms entwine
 The lost, lamented child! the shepherds bold*
 The unconscious infant tear from his unhallowed hold

* For an account of the Fairy superstition, see the introduction to the "Tale of Tamlane," in that elegant work called *Illustrations of the Scottish Border*, vol. ii. p. 174. Second Edition.



To give a better description of it.

*As I have said, the picture is of
 a young woman sitting on the ground,*

and picking up the flowers of the



OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
ORIENTAL ECLOGUES.

THE genius of the pastoral, as well as of every other respectable species of poetry, had its origin in the East, and from thence was transplanted by the Muses of Greece; but whether from the continent of the Lesser Asia, or from Egypt, which, about the era of the Grecian pastoral, was the hospitable nurse of letters, it is not easy to determine. From the subjects, and the manner of Theocritus, one would incline to the latter opinion, while the history of Bion is in favour of the former.

However, though it should still remain a doubt through what channel the pastoral travelled westward, there is not the least shadow of uncertainty concerning its oriental origin.

In those ages, which, guided by sacred chronology, from a comparative view of time, we call the early ages, it appears, from the most authentic historians, that the chiefs of the people employed themselves in rural exercises, and that astronomers and legislators were at the same time shepherds. Thus Strabo in-

forms us, that the history of the creation was communicated to the Egyptians by a Chaldean shepherd.

From these circumstances it is evident, not only that such shepherds were capable of all the dignity and elegance peculiar to poetry, but that whatever poetry they attempted would be of the pastoral kind; would take its subjects from those scenes of rural simplicity in which they were conversant, and, as it was the offspring of harmony and nature, would employ the powers it derived from the former, to celebrate the beauty and benevolence of the latter.

Accordingly we find that the most ancient poems treat of agriculture, astronomy, and other objects within the rural and natural systems.

What constitutes the difference between the Georgic and the Pastoral, is love and the colloquial or dramatic form of composition peculiar to the latter: this form of composition is sometimes dispensed with, and love and rural imagery alone are thought sufficient to distinguish the pastoral. The tender passion, however, seems to be essential to this species of poetry, and is hardly ever excluded from those pieces that were intended to come under this denomination: even in those eclogues of the Amœbean kind, whose only purport is a trial of skill between contending shepherds, love has its usual share, and the praises of their respective mistresses are the general subjects of the competitors.

It is to be lamented, that scarce any oriental compositions of this kind have survived the ravages of ignorance, tyranny, and time; we cannot doubt that many such have been extant, possibly as far down as that fatal period, never to be mentioned in the world of letters without horror, when the glorious monu-

ments of human ingenuity perished in the ashes of the Alexandrian library.

Those ingenious Greeks, whom we call the parents of pastoral poetry, were, probably, no more than imitators, that derived their harmony from higher and remoter sources, and kindled their poetical fires at those then unextinguished lamps which burned within the tombs of oriental genius.

It is evident that Homer has availed himself of those magnificent images and descriptions so frequently to be met with in the books of the Old Testament; and why may not Theocritus, Moschus, and Bion, have found their archetypes in other eastern writers, whose names have perished with their works? yet, though it may not be illiberal to admit such a supposition, it would certainly be invidious to conclude, what the malignity of cavillers alone could suggest with regard to Homer, that they destroyed the sources from which they borrowed, and, as it is fabled of the young of the pelican, drained their supporters to death.

As the Septuagint-translation of the Old Testament was performed at the request, and under the patronage, of Ptolemy Philadelphus, it were not to be wondered if Theocritus, who was entertained at that prince's court, had borrowed some of his pastoral imagery from the poetical passages of those books.—I think it can hardly be doubted that the Sicilian poet had in his eye certain expressions of the prophet Isaiah, when he wrote the following lines:

Νυν ια μιν φορεισι βατοι, φορεισι δ' ακανθαν.

Α δε καλα Ναρμισσος επ' αρμενθοισι κομασαι·

Παντα δ' ιναλλα γινοιτο, και ε πιτυς οχλας πινυμαι

—— και τως κυνας ωλεφος ελπει.

Let vexing brambles the blue violet bear,
 On the rude thorn Narcissus dress his hair,
 All, all revers'd—The pine with pears be crown'd,
 And the bold deer shall drag the trembling hound.

The cause, indeed, of these phænomena is very different in the Greek from what it is in the Hebrew poet; the former employing them on the death, the latter on the birth, of an important person: but the marks of imitation are nevertheless obvious.

It might, however, be expected, that if Theocritus had borrowed at all from the sacred writers, the celebrated epithalamium of Solomon, so much within his own walk of poetry, would not certainly have escaped his notice. His epithalamium on the marriage of Helena, moreover, gave him an open field for imitation; therefore, if he has any obligations to the royal bard, we may expect to find him there. The very opening of the poem is in the Spirit of the Hebrew song:

Οὕτω δὲ πρωΐζα κατεδραθεις, ω φιλε γαμβρε,

The colour of imitation is still stronger in the following passage:

Αὖς αἰ ἑλλοισα καλον διεφαινε προσωπον,
 Ποτνια νυξ ἄτε, λευκαὶ ἰαὲ χειμῶνος ἀνέγτος·
 'Ὡδε καὶ ἡ χρυσία Ἑλένα διεφαινετ' ἐν ἡμῖν,
 Πιερε, μεγάλη· ἄτ' ἀνεδράμει σῆμος ἀφ' ἑσπέρης,
 Ἡ καπῶ κυπαρισσος, ἡ ἄρματι Θισσαλος ἵπκος.

This description of Helen is infinitely above the style and figure of the Sicilian pastoral—"She is like the rising of the golden morning, when the night departeth, and when the winter is over and gone. She

resembleth the cypress in the garden, the horse in the chariots of Thessaly." These figures plainly declare their origin; and others, equally imitative, might be pointed out in the same Idyllium.

This beautiful and luxuriant marriage pastoral of Solomou, is the only perfect form of the oriental eclogue that has survived the ruins of time; a happiness for which it is, probably, more indebted to its sacred character than to its intrinsic merit. Not that it is by any means destitute of poetical excellence: like all the eastern poetry, it is bold, wild, and unconnected in its figures, allusions, and parts, and has all that graceful and magnificent daring which characterises its metaphorical and comparative imagery.

In consequence of these peculiarities, so ill adapted to the frigid genius of the North, Mr. Collins could make but little use of it as a precedent for his oriental eclogues; and even in his third eclogue, where the subject is of a similar nature, he has chosen rather to follow the mode of the Doric and the Latin pastoral.

The scenery and subjects then of the foregoing eclogues alone are oriental; the style and colouring are purely European; and, for this reason, the author's preface, in which he intimates that he had the original from a merchant who traded to the East, is omitted, as being now altogether superfluous.

With regard to the merit of these eclogues, it may justly be asserted, that in simplicity of description and expression, in delicacy and softness of numbers, and in natural and unaffected tenderness, they are not to be equalled by any thing of the pastoral kind, in the English language.

ECLOGUE I.

THIS Eclogue, which is entitled Selim, or the Shepherd's Moral, as there is nothing dramatic in the subject, may be thought the least entertaining of the four: but it is by no means the least valuable. The moral precepts which the intelligent shepherd delivers to his fellow-swains, and the virgins their companions, are such as would infallibly promote the happiness of the pastoral life.

In impersonating the private virtues, the poet has observed great propriety, and has formed their genealogy with the most perfect judgment, when he represents them as the daughters of truth and wisdom.

The characteristics of modesty and chastity are extremely happy and *peinturesque*:

“ Come thou, *whose thoughts as limpid springs are clear,*
To lead the train, sweet Modesty appear;
With thee be Chastity, of all afraid,
Distrusting all, a wise, suspicious maid;
Cold is her breast, *like flowers that drink the dew;*
A silken veil conceals her from the view.”

The two similes borrowed from rural objects are not only much in character, but perfectly natural and expressive. There is, notwithstanding, this defect in the former, that it wants a peculiar propriety; for purity of thought may as well be applied to chastity as to modesty; and from this instance, as well as from a thousand more, we may see the necessity of distinguishing, in characteristic poetry, every object by marks and attributes peculiarly its own.

It cannot be objected to this eclogue, that it wants

both those essential criteria of the pastoral, love and the drama; for though it partakes not of the latter, the former still retains an interest in it, and that too very material, as it professedly consults the virtue and happiness of the lover, while it informs what are the qualities

— that must lead to love.

ECLOGUE II.

ALL the advantages that any species of poetry can derive from the novelty of the subject and scenery, this eclogue possesses. The rout of a camel-driver is a scene that scarce could exist in the imagination of an European, and of its attendant distresses he could have no idea.—These are very happily and minutely painted by our descriptive poet. What sublime simplicity of expression! what nervous plainness in the opening of the poem!

“ In silent horror o’er the boundless waste
The driver Hassan with his camels pass’d.”

The magic pencil of the poet brings the whole scene before us at once, as it were by enchantment; and in this single couplet we feel all the effect that arises from the terrible wildness of a region unenlivened by the habitations of men. The verses that describe so minutely the camel-driver’s little provisions, have a touching influence on the imagination, and prepare the reader to enter more feelingly into his future apprehensions of distress:

“ Bethink thee, Hassan, where shall thirst assuage,
When fails this cruse, his unrelenting rage!”

It is difficult to say whether his apostrophe to the "mute companions of his toils" is more to be admired for the elegance and beauty of the poetical imagery, or for the tenderness and humanity of the sentiment. He who can read it without being affected, will do his heart no injustice, if he concludes it to be destitute of sensibility.

"Ye mute companions of my toils, that bear
In all my griefs a more than equal share!
Here, where no springs in murmurs break away,
Or moss-crown'd fountains mitigate the day,
In vain ye hope the green delights to know,
Which plains more blest, or verdant vales, bestow:
Here rocks alone and tasteless sands are found,
And faint and sickly winds for ever howl around."

Yet in these beautiful lines there is a slight error, which writers of the greatest genius very frequently fall into.—It will be needless to observe to the accurate reader, that in the fifth and sixth verses there is a verbal pleonism where the poet speaks of the *green* delights of *verdant* vales. There is an oversight of the same kind in the Manners, an Ode; where the poet says

"—— Seine's *blue* nymphs deplore
In *watchet* weeds——."

This fault is indeed a common one, but to a reader of taste it is nevertheless disgusting; and it is mentioned here as the error of a man of genius and judgment, that men of genius and judgment may guard against it.

Mr. Collins speaks like a true poet, as well in sentiment as expression, when, with regard to the thirst of wealth, he says,

"Why heed we not, while mad we haste along,
The gentle voice of Peace, or Pleasure's song?"

Or wherefore think the flowery mountain's side,
 The fountain's murmurs, and the valley's pride,
 Why think we these less pleasing to behold,
 Than dreary deserts, if they lead to gold?"

But however just these sentiments may appear to those who have not revolted from nature and simplicity, had the author proclaimed them in Lombard-street, or Cheapside, he would not have been complimented with the understanding of the bell-man.—A striking proof, that our own particular ideas of happiness regulate our opinions concerning the sense and wisdom of others!

It is impossible to take leave of this most beautiful eclogue, without paying the tribute of admiration so justly due to the following nervous lines:

"What if the lion in his rage I meet!—
 Oft in the dust I view his printed feet:
 And, fearful! oft, when day's declining light
 Yields her pale empire to the mourner night,
 By hunger rous'd, he scours the groaning plain,
 Gaunt wolves and sullen tigers in his train:
 Before them death with shrieks directs their way,
 Fills the wild yell, and leads them to their prey."

This, amongst many other passages to be met with in the writings of Collins, shows that his genius was perfectly capable of the grand and magnificent in description, notwithstanding what a learned writer has advanced to the contrary. Nothing, certainly, could be more greatly conceived, or more adequately expressed, than the image in the last couplet.

That deception, sometimes used in rhetoric and poetry, which presents us with an object or sentiment

contrary to what we expected, is here introduced to the greatest advantage:

“ Farewell the youth, whom sighs could not detain,
Whom Zara's breaking heart implor'd in vain!
Yet, as thou go'st, may every blast arise——
Weak and unfelt as these rejected sighs!”

But this, perhaps, is rather an artificial prettiness, than a real or natural beauty.

ECLOGUE III.

THAT innocent and native simplicity of manners, which, in the first eclogue, was allowed to constitute the happiness of love, is here beautifully described in its effects. The sultan of Persia marries a Georgian shepherdess, and finds in her embraces that genuine felicity which unperverted nature alone can bestow. The most natural and beautiful parts of this eclogue are those where the fair sultana refers with so much pleasure to her pastoral amusements, and those scenes of happy innocence in which she passed her early years; particularly when, upon her first departure,

“ Oft as she went, she backward turn'd her view,
And bade that crook and bleating flock adieu.”

This picture of amiable simplicity reminds one of that passage, where Proserpine, when carried off by Pluto, regrets the loss of the flowers she has been gathering.

“ Collecti flores tunicis cecidere remissis:
Tantaque simplicitas puerilibus adfuit annis,
Hæc quoque virginium movit jactura dolorem.”

ECLOGUE IV.

THE beautiful, but unfortunate country, where the scene of this pathetic eclogue is laid, had been recently torn in pieces by the depredations of its savage neighbours, when Mr. Collins so affectingly described its misfortunes. This ingenious man had not only a pencil to pourtray, but a heart to feel for the miseries of mankind; and it is with the utmost tenderness and humanity he enters into the narrative of Circassia's ruin, while he realizes the scene, and brings the present drama before us. Of every circumstance that could possibly contribute to the tender effect this pastoral was designed to produce, the poet has availed himself with the utmost art and address. Thus he prepares the heart to pity the distresses of Circassia, by representing it as the scene of the happiest love.

“ In fair Circassia, where, to love inclin'd,
Each swain was blest, for every maid was kind.”

To give the circumstance of the dialogue a more affecting solemnity, he makes the time midnight, and describes the two shepherds in the very act of flight from the destruction that swept over their country:

“ Sad o'er the dews, two brother shepherds fled,
Where wildering fear and desperate sorrow led.”

There is a beauty and propriety in the epithet *wildering*, which strikes us more forcibly, the more we consider it.

The opening of the dialogue is equally happy, natural, and unaffected; when one of the shepherds, weary and overcome with the fatigue of flight, calls

upon his companion to review the length of way they had passed. This is certainly painting from nature, and the thoughts, however obvious, or destitute of refinement, are perfectly in character. But, as the closest pursuit of nature is the surest way to excellence in general, and to sublimity in particular, in poetical description, so we find that this simple suggestion of the shepherd is not unattended with magnificence. There is a grandeur and variety in the landscape he describes :

“ And first review that long-extended plain,
And you wide groves, already past with pain !
Yon ragged cliff, whose dangerous path we try’d !
And, last, this lofty mountain’s weary side !”

There is, in imitative harmony, an act of expressing a slow and difficult movement by adding to the usual number of pauses in a verse. This is observable in the line that describes the ascent of the mountain:

And last || this lofty mountain’s || weary side ||.

Here we find the number of pauses, or musical bars, which, in an heroic verse, is commonly two, increased to three.

The liquid melody, and the numerous sweetness of expression in the following descriptive lines is almost inimitably beautiful:

“ Sweet to the sight is Zabran’s flowery plain,
And once by nymphs and shepherds lov’d in vain !
No more the virgins shall delight to rove
By Sargis’ banks, or Irwan’s shady grove ;
On Tarkie’s mountain catch the cooling gale,
Or breathe the sweets of Aly’s flowery vale.”

Nevertheless in this delightful landscape there is an obvious fault: there is no distinction between the plain of Zabran, and the vale of Aly: they are both flowery, and consequently undiversified. This could not proceed from the poet's want of judgment, but from inattention: it had not occurred to him that he had employed the epithet flowery twice within so short a compass; an oversight which those who are accustomed to poetical, or, indeed, to any other species of composition, know to be very possible.

Nothing can be more beautifully conceived, or more pathetically expressed, than the shepherd's apprehensions for his fair country-women, exposed to be ravages of the invaders.

“ In vain Circassia boasts her spicy groves,
For ever 'fam'd for pure and happy loves:
In vain she boasts her fairest of the fair,
Their eyes' blue languish, and their golden hair!
Those eyes in tears their fruitless grief shall send;
Those hairs the Tartar's cruel hand shall rend.”

There is certainly some very powerful charm in the quick melody of sounds. The editor of these poems could never read or hear the following verse repeated, without a degree of pleasure otherwise entirely unaccountable:

“ Their eyes' *blue languish*, and their *golden hair*.”

Such are the Oriental Eclogues, which we leave with the same kind of anxious pleasure we feel upon a temporary parting with a beloved friend.

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
ODES,
DESCRIPTIVE AND ALLEGORICAL.

THE genius of Collins was capable of every degree of excellence in lyric poetry, and perfectly qualified for that high province of the muse. Possessed of a native ear for all the varieties of harmony and modulation, susceptible of the finest feelings of tenderness and humanity, but, above all, carried away by that high enthusiasm which gives to imagination its strongest colouring, he was at once capable of soothing the ear with the melody of his numbers, of influencing the passions by the force of his pathos, and of gratifying the fancy by the luxuriancy of his description.

In consequence of these powers, but, more particularly, in consideration of the last, he chose such subjects for his lyric essays as were most favourable for the indulgence of description and allegory; where he could exercise his powers in moral and personal painting; where he could exert his invention in conferring attributes on images or objects already new known, and described by a determinate number of characteristics; where he might give an uncommon eclat to his figures, by placing them in happier attitudes, or

in more advantageous lights, and introduce new forms from the moral and intellectual world into the society of impersonated beings.

Such, no doubt, were the privileges which the poet expected, and such were the advantages he derived from the descriptive and allegorical nature of his themes.

It seems to have been the whole industry of our author (and it is, at the same time, almost all the claim to moral excellence his writings can boast) to promote the influence of the social virtues, by painting them in the fairest and happiest lights.

“ *Melior fieri tuendo,*”

would be no improper motto to his poems in general, but of his lyric poems it seems to be the whole moral tendency and effect. If, therefore, it should appear to some readers that he has been more industrious to cultivate description than sentiment; it may be observed, that his descriptions themselves are sentimental, and answer the whole end of that species of writing, by embellishing every feature of virtue, and by conveying, through the effects of the pencil, the finest moral lessons to the mind.

Horace speaks of the fidelity of the ear in preference to the uncertainty of the eye; but if the mind receives conviction, it is certainly of very little importance through what medium, or by which of the senses, it is conveyed. The impressions left on the imagination may possibly be thought less durable than the deposits of memory, but it may very well admit of a question, whether a conclusion of reason, or an impression of imagination, will soonest make its way to the heart. A moral precept, conveyed in words, is only an ac-

count of truth in its effects; a moral picture is truth exemplified; and which is most likely to gain upon the affections, it may not be difficult to determine.

This, however, must be allowed, that those works approach the nearest to perfection which unite these powers and advantages; which at once influence the imagination, and engage the memory; the former by the force of animated and striking description, the latter by a brief, but harmonious conveyance of precept: thus, while the heart is influenced through the operation of the passions or the fancy, the effect, which might otherwise have been transient, is secured by the co-operating power of the memory, which treasures up in a short aphorism the moral scene.

This is a good reason, and this, perhaps, is the only reason that can be given, why our dramatic performances should generally end with a chain of couplets. In these the moral of the whole piece is usually conveyed; and that assistance which the memory borrows from rhyme, as it was probably the original cause of it, gives it usefulness and propriety even there.

After these apologies for the descriptive turn of the following odes, something remains to be said on the origin and use of allegory in poetical composition.

By this we are not to understand the trope in the schools, which is defined *aliud verbis, aliud sensu ostendere*, and of which Quintilian says, *usus est, ut tristitia dicamus melioribus verbis, aut bonæ rei quedam contrariis significemus*, &c. It is not the verbal, but the sentimental allegory, not allegorical expression (which, indeed, might come under the term of metaphor), but allegorical imagery, that is here in question.

When we endeavour to trace this species of figurative sentiment to its origin, we find it coeval with literature itself. It is generally agreed that the most ancient productions are poetical, and it is certain that the most ancient poems abound with allegorical imagery.

If, then, it be allowed that the first literary productions were poetical, we shall have little or no difficulty in discovering the origin of allegory.

At the birth of letters, in the transition from hieroglyphical to literal expression, it is not to be wondered if the custom of expressing ideas by personal images, which had so long prevailed, should still retain its influence on the mind, though the use of letters had rendered the practical application of it superfluous. Those who had been accustomed to express strength by the image of an elephant, swiftness by that of a panther, and courage by that of a lion, would make no scruple of substituting, in letters, the symbols for the ideas they had been used to represent.

Here we plainly see the origin of allegorical expression, that it arose from the ashes of hieroglyphics; and if to the same cause we should refer that figurative boldness of style and imagery which distinguish the oriental writings, we shall, perhaps, conclude more justly, than if we should impute it to the superior grandeur of eastern genius.

From the same source with the verbal, we are to derive the sentimental allegory, which is nothing more than a continuation of the metaphorical or symbolical expression of the several agents in an action, or the different objects in a scene.

The latter most peculiarly comes under the denomination of allegorical imagery; and in this species of allegory, we include the impersonation of passions,

affections, virtues and vices, &c. on account of which, principally, the following odes were properly termed, by their author, allegorical.

With respect to the utility of this figurative writing, the same arguments that have been advanced in favour of descriptive poetry, will be of weight likewise here. It is, indeed, from impersonation, or, as it is commonly termed, personification, that poetical description borrows its chief powers and graces. Without the aid of this, moral and intellectual painting would be flat and unanimated, and even the scenery of material objects would be dull, without the introduction of fictitious life.

These observations will be most effectually illustrated by the sublime and beautiful odes that occasioned them; in those it will appear how happily this allegorical painting may be executed by the genuine powers of poetical genius, and they will not fail to prove its force and utility by passing through the imagination to the heart.

ODE TO PITY.

“ **B**y Pella's bard, a magic name,
By all the griefs his thought could frame,
Receive my humble rite :
Long, Pity, let the nations view
Thy sky-worn robes of tenderest blue,
And eyes of dewy light !”

The propriety of invoking Pity through the mediation of Euripides is obvious.—That admirable poet had the keys of all the tender passions, and, therefore, could not but stand in the highest esteem with a

ter of Mr. Collins's sensibility.—He did, indeed, admire him as much as Milton professedly did, and probably for the same reason; but we do not find that he has copied him so closely as the last-mentioned poet has sometimes done, and particularly in the opening of *Samson Agonistes*, which is an evident imitation of the following passage in the *Phœnisæ*.

Ἢς προπαροιθε Συγατερ, ὡς τυφλῷ ποδὶ
Ὀφθαλμος εἰ σύ, νυμβαταῖσιν ἄστρον ὡς
Δευρ' εἰς τὸ λευρὸν πεδῖον ἰχθυὸς τιθεῖσ' ἑμὸν,
Προβαίνει————. Act III. Sc. I.

The “eyes of dewy light” is one of the happiest strokes of imagination, and may be ranked among these expressions which

“—give us back the image of the mind.”

“Wild Arun too has heard thy strains,
And Echo, 'midst my native plains,
Been sooth'd with Pity's lute.”

“There first the wren thy myrtles shed
On gentlest Otway's infant head.”

sex, in which county the Arun is a small river, and the honour of giving birth to Otway as well as to Collins: both these, unhappily, became the objects of that pity by which their writings are distinguished. There was a similitude in their genius and their sufferings. There was a resemblance in the misfortunes and in the dissipation of their lives; and the circumstances of their death cannot be remembered without pain.

The thought of painting in the temple of Pity the story of human misfortunes, and of drawing the scenes from the tragic muse, is very happy, and in every respect worthy the imagination of Collins.

ODE TO FEAR.

MR. Collins, who had often determined to apply himself to dramatic poetry, seems here, with the same view, to have addressed one of the principal powers of the drama, and to implore that mighty influence she had given to the genius of Shakspeare :

“ Hither again thy fury deal,
Teach me but once like him to feel :
His cypress wreath my meed decree,
And I, O Fear, will dwell with thee !”

In the construction of this nervous ode, the author has shown equal power of judgment and imagination. Nothing can be more striking than the violent and abrupt abbreviation of the measure in the fifth and sixth verses, when he feels the strong influence of the power he invokes :

“ Ah, Fear, ah, frantic Fear !
I see, I see thee near.”

The editor of these poems has met with nothing in the same species of poetry, either in his own, or in any other language, equal, in all respects, to the following description of danger :

“ Danger, whose limbs of giant mould
What mortal eye can fix'd behold ?
Who stalks his round, an hideous form,
Howling amidst the midnight storm,
Or throws him on the ridgy steep
Of some loose hanging rock to sleep.”

It is impossible to contemplate the image conveyed in the two last verses without those emotions of terror it was intended to excite. It has, moreover, the

entire advantage of novelty to recommend it; for there is too much originality in all the circumstances, to suppose that the author had in his eye that description of the penal situation of Catiline in the ninth *Æneid*:

“ ——— Te, Catilina, minaci
Pendentem scopulo.”

The archetype of the English poet's idea was in nature, and probably to her alone he was indebted for the thought. From her, likewise, he derived that magnificence of conception, that horrible grandeur of imagery, displayed in the following lines:

“ And those, the fiends, who near allied,
O'er nature's wounds and wrecks preside;
While vengeance in the lurid air
Lifts her red arm, expos'd and bare:
On whom that ravening brood of fate,
Who lap the blood of sorrow, wait.”

That nutritive enthusiasm, which cherishes the seeds of poetry, and which is, indeed, the only soil wherein they will grow to perfection, lays open the mind to all the influences of fiction. A passion for whatever is greatly wild, or magnificent in the works of nature, seduces the imagination to attend to all that is extravagant, however unnatural. Milton was notoriously fond of high romance and gothic *diableries*; and Collins, who in genius and enthusiasm bore no very distant resemblance to Milton, was wholly carried away by the same attachments.

“ Be mine to read the visions old,
Which thy awakening bards have told:
And, lest thou meet my blasted view,
Hold each strange tale devoutly true.”
“ On that thrice hallow'd eve, &c.”

There is an old traditionary superstition, that on St. Mark's eve, the forms of all such persons as shall die within the ensuing year, make their solemn entry into the churches of their respective parishes, as St. Patrick swam over the channel, without their heads.

ODE TO SIMPLICITY.

THE measure of the ancient ballad seems to have been made choice of for this ode, on account of the subject; and it has, indeed, an air of simplicity not altogether unaffecting:

“ By all the honey'd store
On Hybla's thymy shore,
By all her blooms, and mingled murmurs dear,
By her whose love-lorn woe,
In evening musings slow,
Sooth'd sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear.”

This allegorical imagery of the honey'd store, the blooms, and mingled murmurs of Hybla, alluding to the sweetness and beauty of the Attic poetry, has the finest and the happiest effect: yet, possibly, it will bear a question, whether the ancient Greek tragedians had a general claim to simplicity in any thing more than the plans of their drama. Their language, at least, was infinitely metaphorical; yet it must be owned that they justly copied nature and the passions, and so far, certainly, they were entitled to the palm of true simplicity; the following most beautiful speech of Polynices will be a monument of this, so long as poetry shall last.

πολυδακρυς δ' αφικομένη
 Χρονιος ιδων μεταθρα, και βωμης Δεωι,
 Γυμνασια δ' οισιν ενετραφην, Διρκης, δ' οδωρ.
 Ων η δικαιως απελαθεις, ξενη πολιν.
 Ναιω, δι οσων ομμ' εχων δακρυρροον.
 Αλλ' (εκ γαρ αλγος αλγος) αυ σε δεσπομα,
 Καρα ξυρτικis, και πεπλως μεταγχχιμωs
 Εχυσαν. EURIP. Phœniss. ver. 369.

"But staid to sing alone
 To one distinguish'd throne."

The poet cuts off the prevalence of simplicity among the Romans with the reign of Augustus; and, indeed, it did not continue much longer, most of the compositions, after that date, giving into false and artificial ornament.

"No more, in hall or bower,
 The passions own thy power,
 Love, only love, her forceless numbers mean."

In these lines the writings of the Provençal poets are principally alluded to, in which simplicity is generally sacrificed to the rhapsodies of romantic love.

ODE ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER.

Procul! O! procul este profani!

THIS ode is so infinitely abstracted and replete with high enthusiasm, that it will find few readers capable of entering into the beauty of it, or of relishing its beauties. There is a style of sentiment as utterly unintelligible to common capacities, as if the subject were treated in an unknown language; and it is on the same account that abstracted poetry will never have many admirers.

The authors of such poems must be content the approbation of those heaven-favoured gen who, by a similarity of taste and sentiment, are en to penetrate the high mysteries of inspired fancy to pursue the loftiest flights of enthusiastic imagin Nevertheless, the praise of the distinguished is certainly preferable to the applause of the undi ing million; for all praise is valuable in proport the judgment of those who confer it.

As the subject of this ode is uncommon, so a style and expression highly metaphorical an stracted: thus the sun is called "the rich youth of morn," the ideas are termed "the sha tribes of mind," &c. We are struck with the priety of this mode of expression here, and it s us new proofs of the analogy that subsists be language and sentiment.

Nothing can be more loftily imagined the creation of the Cestus of fancy in this ode: th gorical imagery is rich and sublime: and the vation, that the dangerous passions kept aloof the operation, is founded on the strictest philo cal truth; for poetical fancy can exist only in that are perfectly serene, and in some measu stracted from the influences of sense.

The scene of Milton's "inspiring hour" is pe in character, and described with all those wild appearances of which the great poet was so e astically fond:

"I view that oak, the fancied glades among,
By which as Milton lay, his evening ear,
Nigh spher'd in heaven, its native strains could h

ODE TO MERCY.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1746.

THE ode written in 1746, and the Ode to Mercy, seem to have been written on the same occasion, viz. the late rebellion; the former in memory of those heroes who fell in defence of their country, the latter to excite sentiments of compassion in favour of those unhappy and deluded wretches who became a sacrifice to public justice.

The language and imagery of both are very beautiful; but the scene and figures described, and the strophe of the Ode to Mercy, are exquisitely striking, and would afford a painter one of the finest subjects in the world.

ODE TO LIBERTY.

THE ancient states of Greece, perhaps the only ones in which a perfect model of liberty ever existed, are naturally brought to view in the opening of the poem.

“ Who shall awake the Spartan fire,
And call in solemn sounds to life,
The youths, whose locks divinely spreading,
Like vernal hyacinths in sullen hue.”

There is something extremely bold in this imagery of the locks of the Spartan youths, and greatly superior to that description Jocasta gives us of the hair of Polynices.

Βοτρυχων τι κυανοχροτα χαιτας
Πλοκαμωι —————.

"What new Alcæus, fancy-blest,
Shall sing the sword, in myrtles drest, &c."

This alludes to a fragment of Alcæus still remaining; in which the poet celebrates Harmodius and Aristogiton, who slew the tyrant Hipparchus, and thereby restored the liberty of Athens.

The fall of Rome is here most nervously described in one line:

"With heaviest sound, a giant-statue, fell."

The thought seems altogether new, and the imitative harmony in the structure of the verse is admirable.

After bewailing the ruin of ancient liberty, the poet considers the influence it has retained, or still retains, among the moderns; and here the free republics of Italy naturally engage his attention.—Florence, indeed, only to be lamented on account of losing its liberty under those patrons of letters, the Medicean family; the *jealous* Pisa, justly so called in respect to its long impatience and regret under the same yoke; and the *small* Marino, which, however unrespectable with regard to power or extent of territory, has, at least, this distinction to boast, that it has preserved its liberty longer than any other state, ancient or modern, having, without any revolution, retained its present mode of government near 1400 years. Moreover the patron saint who founded it, and from whom it takes its name, deserves this poetical record, as he is, perhaps, the only saint that ever contributed to the establishment of freedom.

"Nor e'er her former pride relate
To sad Liguria's bleeding state."

In these lines the poet alludes to those ravages in the state of Genoa, occasioned by the unhappy divisions of the Guelphs and Gibelines.

“ ——— When the favour'd of thy choice,
The daring archer heard thy voice.”

For an account of the celebrated event referred to in these verses, see Voltaire's Epistle to the King of Prussia.

“ Those whom the rod of Alva bruis'd,
Whose crown a British queen refus'd !”

The Flemings were so dreadfully oppressed by this sanguinary general of Philip the Second, that they offered their sovereignty to Elizabeth; but, happily for her subjects, she had policy and magnanimity enough to refuse it. Deformeaux, in his *Abrégé Chronologique de l'Histoire d'Espagne*, thus describes the sufferings of the Flemings: *Le Duc d'Albe achevoit de réduire les Flamands au désespoir. Après avoir inondé les échafauts du sang le plus noble et le plus précieux, il faisoit construire des citadelles en divers endroits, & vouloit établir l'Alcavala, ce tribute onéreux qui avoit été longtems en usage parmi les Espagnols.* Abreg. Chron. tom. iv.

“ ——— Mona,
Where thousand elfin shapes abide.”

Mona is properly the Roman name of the isle of Anglesey, anciently so famous for its Druids; but sometimes, as in this place, it is given to the Isle of Man. Both these isles still retain much of the genius of superstition, and are now the only places where there is the least chance of finding a fairy.

ODE TO A LADY,

ON THE DEATH OF COLONEL ROSS, IN THE ACTION OF
FONTENROY.

THE Iambic kind of numbers in which this ode is conceived, seems as well calculated for tender and plaintive subjects, as for those where strength or rapidity is required.—This, perhaps, is owing to the repetition of the strain in the same stanza; for sorrow rejects variety, and affects an uniformity of complaint. It is needless to observe that this ode is replete with harmony, spirit, and pathos; and there, surely, appears no reason why the seventh and eighth stanzas should be omitted in that copy printed in Dodsley's collection of poems.

ODE TO EVENING.

THE blank ode has for some time solicited admission into the English poetry; but its efforts, hitherto, seem to have been vain, at least its reception has been no more than partial. It remains a question, then, whether there is not something in the nature of blank verse less adapted to the lyric than to the heroic measure, since, though it has been generally received in the latter, it is yet unadopted in the former. In order to discover this, we are to consider the different modes of these different species of poetry. That of the heroic is uniform; that of the lyric is various; and in these circumstances of uniformity and variety, probably, lies

the cause why blank verse has been successful in the one, and unacceptable in the other. While it presented itself only in one form, it was familiarized to the ear by custom; but where it was obliged to assume the different shapes of the lyric muse, it seemed still a stranger of uncouth figure, was received rather with curiosity than pleasure, and entertained without that ease, or satisfaction, which acquaintance and familiarity produce.—Moreover, the heroic blank verse obtained a sanction of infinite importance to its general reception, when it was adopted by one of the greatest poets the world ever produced, and was made the vehicle of the noblest poem that ever was written. When this poem at length extorted that applause which ignorance and prejudice had united to withhold, the versification soon found its imitators, and became more generally successful than even in those countries from whence it was imported. But lyric blank verse had met with no such advantages; for Mr. Collins, whose genius and judgment in harmony might have given it so powerful an effect, hath left us but one specimen of it in the Ode to Evening.

In the choice of his measure he seems to have had in his eye Horace's Ode to Pyrrha; for this ode bears the nearest resemblance to that mixed kind of the asclepiad and pherecratic verse; and that resemblance in some degree reconciles us to the want of rhyme, while it reminds us of those great masters of antiquity, whose works had no need of this whimsical jingle of sounds.

From the following passage one might be induced to think that the poet had it in view to render his subject and his versification suitable to each other on this occasion, and that, when he addressed himself to

the sober power of Evening, he had thought proper to lay aside the foppery of rhyme ;

“ Now teach me, maid compos’d,
To breathe some soften’d strain,
Whose numbers stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial lov’d return !”

But whatever were the numbers, or the versification of this ode, the imagery and enthusiasm it contains could not fail of rendering it delightful. No other of Mr. Collins’s odes is more generally characteristic of his genius. In one place we discover his passion for visionary beings:

“ For when thy folding-star arising shows
His pale circlet at his warning lamp
The fragrant hours and elves
Who slept in buds the day,
And many a nymph who wreaths her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and lovelier still,
The pensive pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy ear.”

In another we behold his strong bias to melancholy:

“ Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,
Or find some ruin ’midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.”

Then appears his taste for what is wildly grand and magnificent in nature ; when, prevented by storms from enjoying his evening walk, he wishes for a situation,

“ That from the mountain’s sides
Views wild and swelling floods ;”

And, through the whole, his invariable attachment to the expression of painting:

“ — and marks o’er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.”

It might be a sufficient encomium on this beautiful ode to observe, that it has been particularly admired by a lady to whom nature has given the most perfect principles of taste. She has not even complained of the want of rhyme in it: a circumstance by no means unfavourable to the cause of lyric blank verse; for surely, if a fair reader can endure an ode without bells and chimes, the masculine genius may dispense with them.

THE MANNERS.

AN ODE.

FROM the subject and sentiments of this ode, it seems not improbable that the author wrote it about the time when he left the university; when, weary with the pursuit of academical studies, he no longer confined himself to the search of theoretical knowledge, but commenced the scholar of humanity, to study nature in her works, and man in society.

The following farewell to Science exhibits a very just as well as striking picture: for however exalted in theory the Platonic doctrines may appear, it is certain that Platonism and Pyrrhonism are allied:

“ Farewell the porch, whose roof is seen,
Arch’d with th’ enlivening olive’s green:
Where Science, prank’d in tissued vest,
By Reason, Pride, and Fancy drest,
Come like a bride, so trim array’d,
To wed with Doubt in Plato’s shade!”

When the mind goes in pursuit of visionary systems, it is not far from the regions of doubt; and the greater its capacity to think abstractedly, to reason and refine, the more it will be exposed to, and bewildered in, uncertainty.—From an enthusiastic warmth of temper, indeed, we may for a while be encouraged to persist in some favourite doctrine, or to adhere to some adopted system; but when that enthusiasm, which is founded on the vivacity of the passions, gradually cools and dies away with them, the opinions it supported drop from us, and we are thrown upon the unhospitable shore of doubt.—A striking proof of the necessity of some moral rule of wisdom and virtue, and some system of happiness established by unerring knowledge, and unlimited power.

In the poet's address to Humour in this ode, there is one image of singular beauty and propriety. The ornaments in the hair of Wit are of such a nature, and disposed in such a manner, as to be perfectly symbolical and characteristic :

“ Me too amidst thy band admit,
There where the young-ey'd healthful Wit,
(Whose jewels in his crisped hair
Are plac'd each other's beams to share,
Whom no delights from thee divide)
In laughter loos'd attends thy side.”

Nothing could be more expressive of wit, which consists in a happy collision of comparative and relative images, than this reciprocal reflection of light from the disposition of the jewels.

“ O Humour, thou whose name is known
To Britain's favour'd isle alone.”

The author could only mean to apply this to the time when he wrote, since other nations had produced

works of great humour, as he himself acknowledges afterwards.

“ By old Miletus, &c.

By all you taught the Tuscan maids, &c.”

The Milesian and Tuscan romances were by no means distinguished for humour; but, as they were the models of that species of writing in which humour was afterwards employed, they are, probably for that reason only, mentioned here.

THE PASSIONS.

AN ODE FOR MUSIC.

IF the music which was composed for this ode, had equal merit with the ode itself, it must have been the most excellent performance of the kind, in which poetry and music have, in modern times, united. Other pieces of the same nature have derived their greatest reputation from the perfection of the music that accompanied them, having in themselves little more merit than that of an ordinary ballad: but in this we have the whole soul and power of poetry—Expression that, even without the aid of music, strikes to the heart; and imagery of power enough to transport the attention, without the forceful alliance of corresponding sounds! what, then, must have been the effects of these united!

It is very observable, that though the measure is the same, in which the musical efforts of fear, anger, and despair, are described, yet by the variation of the cadence, the character and operation of each is strongly expressed: thus particularly of Despair:

" With woful measure wan Despair—
 Low sullen sounds his grief beguil'd,
 A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
 'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild."

He must be a very unskilful composer who could not catch the power of imitative harmony from these lines!

The picture of Hope that follows this, is beautiful almost beyond imitation. By the united powers of imagery and harmony, that delightful being is exhibited with all the charms and graces that pleasure and fancy have appropriated to her.

Relegat, qui semel percurrît ;
 Qui nunquam legit, legat.

" But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
 What was thy delighted measure !
 Still it whisper'd promis'd pleasure,
 And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail !
 Still would her touch the strain prolong,
 And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
 She call'd on Echo still through all the song ;
 And where her sweetest theme she chose,
 A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
 And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden hair."

In what an exalted light does the above stanza place this great master of poetical imagery and harmony ! what varied sweetness of numbers ! what delicacy of judgment and expression ! how characteristically does Hope prolong her strain, repeat her soothing closes, call upon her associate Echo for the same purposes, and display every pleasing grace peculiar to her !

" And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden hair."

Legat, qui nunquam legit ;
 Qui semel percurrît, relegat.

The descriptions of joy, jealousy, and revenge, are excellent; though not equally so. Those of melancholy and cheerfulness are superior to every thing of the kind; and, upon the whole, there may be very little hazard in asserting that this is the finest ode in the English language.

AN EPISTLE

TO SIR THOMAS HANMER, ON HIS EDITION OF
SHAKSPEARE'S WORKS.

THIS poem was written by the author at the university, about the time when Sir Thomas Hanmer's pompous edition of Shakspeare was printed at Oxford. If it has not so much merit as the rest of his poems, it has still more than the subject deserves. The versification is easy and genteel, and the allusions always poetical. The character of the poet Fletcher in particular is very justly drawn in this epistle.

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF MR. THOMSON.

MR. Collins had *skill to complain*. Of that mournful melody, and those tender images, which are the distinguishing excellencies of such pieces as bewail departed friendship, or beauty, he was an almost unequalled master. He knew perfectly to exhibit such circumstances, peculiar to the objects, as awaken the influences of pity; and while, from his own great sensibility, he felt what he wrote, he naturally addressed himself to the feelings of others.

To read such lines as the following, all-beautiful and tender as they are, without corresponding emotions of pity, is surely impossible:

“ The tender thought on thee shall dwell,
Each lonely scene shall thee restore,
For thee the tear be duly shed ;
Belov'd, till life can charm no more ;
And mourn'd, till Pity's self be dead.”

The Ode on the Death of Thomson seems to have been written in an excursion to Richmond by water. The rural scenery has a proper effect in an ode to the memory of a poet, much of whose merit lay in descriptions of the same kind; and the appellations of “ Druid,” and “ meek Nature's child,” are happily characteristic. For the better understanding of this ode, it is necessary to remember, that Mr. Thomson lies buried in the church of Richmond.

THE END.



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